

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 1

MARCH 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

THIS is the 169th issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the fifteenth volume and we find the record industry enjoying its largest sales in history. More and more persons are realizing the cultural importance of having a reasonably comprehensive record library in their homes. A few years ago a phonograph and a stack of a couple dozen records seemed to be enough, but things have changed. The radio, which at one time most folks thought would do away with the phonograph entirely, has made the public at large conscious of the vast amount of great music that is available, and the desire to have it on hand for study and enjoyment is quite natural. A well-stocked collection of records makes this possible. To help in the development of such a collection is the primary object of THE NEW RECORDS.

In the days when practically all of the fine records that were available in this country were issued by two or three publishers, and these publishers issued regularly at least once a year most comprehensive catalogs, it was reasonably easy to keep up with the new recordings. Now, however, there are several dozen publishers of classical records in America, and in addition to their output, records from many foreign companies are being made available. Thus it becomes more and more important to have such a bulletin as THE NEW RECORDS, which attempts to cover the whole field (both domestic and imported).

It has been, and it will continue to be, the aim of our editors to aid our readers who are building such record libraries. We realize that many of them are persons of limited means who cannot always buy all of the records that they would like, but must be guided by a rather strict budget, and so it is of importance to them to know what recordings are available and to have them frankly appraised. Hundreds of

readers have written us that they have been satisfactorily guided by the opinions of our reviewers in the building of their present libraries. We realize that we have a real responsibility and we hope to merit the continued confidence of our ever-growing list of subscribers.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Mr. Kolodin has thoroughly revised his famous *A Guide to Recorded Music*, which was published in 1941, omitting a large number of recordings that have been deleted from the catalogs and including the ones that have been added since that time. The arrangement of the compositions by composers is the same as in the earlier edition, but Mr. Kolodin has omitted the symbols that indicated the quality of the reproduction and the interpretation, and also indicated whether the price was economical, equitable or exorbitant. The reproduction and the interpretation are covered in the notes on each recording and the fairness of the price is left to the judgment of the reader. The very comprehensive index of "performers and performing groups" is again added at the end of the general text. By the aid of this index the recordings of any artist in whom one may be interested may easily be found.

Mr. Kolodin is an able music critic and he has devoted much time and study to recorded music and his judgment is for the most part thoroughly sound. He assumes that his readers know their music and he devotes his comments to the reproduction and interpretation of the various available recorded versions. All in all this is a grand book. We are going to find it of invaluable help in our work, and we believe that most collectors will wish to add it to their libraries.

With Strings Attached: Reminiscences and Reflections. By Joseph Szigeti. Illustrated. 341+xvii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.

We thoroughly enjoyed Szigeti's fascinating account of his musical life—his childhood, student days, his concert tours as a child prodigy with his father, and his maturity on the concert platform. He writes interestingly with a fine sense of humor and the hundreds of important personages he has met in his extensive travels come to life in his intriguing reminiscences. Anyone who is interested in the musical scene of the last forty years will find much informative and lively reading in Mr. Szigeti's book. It is one of those books that the reader picks up for a few minutes and finds himself reading on and on—one amusing or exciting incident follows another in quick succession and Szigeti's interspersed comments show a sound philosophy of life in general.

Szigeti has always been deeply interested in records since the time as a young child he made home-made recordings on the old wax cylinders. A complete list of his available records is included in his volume. A carefully prepared index makes it possible for the reader to quickly find any incident or anecdote he may wish to refer to.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Khachaturian: Gayne—Ballet Suite. (Excerpts). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-664. \$4.

Gayne is unquestionably one of the most remarkable works by a contemporary composer and it is easily one of the half-dozen best ballet scores of the past quarter of a century. It has everything. Rhythmically we would have to compare it to a masterpiece such as the Beethoven *Seventh Symphony*, for we can think of few works with more interesting, intriguing, and pronounced rhythms. The opening section—Sabre Dance—is really exciting music, with a powerful drive that is irresistible. Anyone whose blood doesn't tingle when he hears this colorful dance surely needs a tonic. The orchestration and tone coloring throughout bespeak a skilled, sure, and finished master—highly inspired. In addition to his compelling rhythms and skillful orchestration, we must especially compliment Khachaturian for his melodic beauty. Yes, melody is still a most important element even in today's music which so often strives for effect by harmonic manipulation. But Gayne falls easily on the ear at first hearing. At least one section of the suite is calm, serene music: the Lullaby, melodically lovely, with exotic Eastern coloring.

Besides the Sabre Dance and Lullaby already mentioned, the suite includes the following sections: Dance of Ayshe, Dance of the Rose Maidens, Dance of the Kurds, Dance of the Young Kurds, Armen's Variations, and Lezhniska. The story of the ballet, as outlined in the notes accompanying this set, is dramatic and plausible and full of action; and we would imagine it provides a colorful and absorbing spectacle when danced. As music alone, it stands up well indeed, for no knowledge of the action of the ballet is needed to make the music interesting.

Efrem Kurtz gives a telling account of this complex and difficult score. It is virtuoso music that demands a virtuoso performance, which Kurtz and the New Yorkers fortunately give it. Parts of Gayne are also available on imported Compass (Soviet) records, and although we have not heard that set, we doubt if it can surpass Kurtz's reading as a performance, for most Soviet recordings do not have the finish of our domestic ones. The reproduction of the present set is hardly ideal—we would give triple the price of this set to have had English Decca's frrr system of recording employed. But on a large well-tuned phonograph, it does not come through too poorly. A score as heavily orchestrated as Gayne is difficult to capture, and in spots Columbia has clouded it, although

much of it comes through clearly and brilliantly. All in all it is one of Columbia's most notable releases, and they may preen their feathers and point with pride to Gayne. S.

Falla: El Amor Brujo. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski, vocal movements sung in Spanish by Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1089. \$3.85.

Falla: El Amor Brujo. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner, vocal movements sung in Spanish by Carol Brice (contralto). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-633. \$4.

A complete recording of Manuel de Falla's ballet *El Amor Brujo* has been needed for some time. And this month, not one, but two recordings of this colorful work have popped up to challenge each other.

Leopold Stokowski enters the arena versus Fritz Reiner. The blonde, erstwhile Philadelphia conductor appears armed with the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra and mezzo-soprano, Nan Merriman, while Mr. Reiner has the Pittsburgh Symphony and Carol Brice, Negro contralto, to aid and abet him.

Playing the two albums, side by side, we award Reiner and his orchestra the palm without any question. Not only has Columbia recorded de Falla's work far more vividly and trenchantly than Victor, but Reiner's playing boasts crisper rhythms and greater tonal, dynamic, as well as rhythmic contrasts. This is rather surprising, as generally, when Stokowski is present, the reproduction and actual recording technique is outstanding, due to his knowledge and supervision. The Hollywood Bowl Symphony sounds thin and distant compared to the men from Pittsburgh. Only in the *Ritual Fire Dance*, the most celebrated section of *El Amor Brujo*, does Stokowski sound more exciting than Reiner. In the other sections he has to take a back seat to his rival.

The singer is pretty important in *El Amor Brujo*. She appears on three of the six sides of the album. Nan Merriman is far more idiomatic than Carol Brice in this music. Miss Merriman, with her abandoned style and chest tones, manages to sound really Spanish, while Miss Brice's fine voice sounds rather tame and lugubrious.

Stokowski, following his natural bent of improving on the composer, introduces clanging bells in the final section, but for all these embellishments, his album falls short of Reiner's both in interpretation and reproduction.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Williams: Job—A Masque for Dancing. B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 5-12" discs (V-DB-6289 to V-DB-6293) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-DB-9024 to V-DB-9028). \$12.50.

One of the big recording events in England during 1946 was the release of Vaughan Williams' *Job*

which took place in June. The first copies of this outstanding recording recently arrived in this country and the discerning music lovers on this side of the Atlantic seem to feel pretty generally that it is worth the deepest consideration and investigation. Whether as music it is as important as most British critics seem to think it is, is a question; but that it has been given a superb performance, by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir Adrian Boult, is conceded by all who have heard these discs.

The work, a ballet, or as the composer prefers to call it "a masque for dancing," is based on a series of religious engravings by the great English mystic William Blake (1757-1827), entitled *Inventions to the Book of Job* (1820-1826). The music from time to time refers to individual pictures in the series. The work is divided into nine scenes and in many of these scenes there are several parts. For example, Scene I contains *Introduction*; *Pastoral Dance*; *Satan's Appeal to God*; and *Saraband of the Sons of God*. Space does not permit us to go into detail regarding these many parts but those who are interested will find them carefully listed and described in W.R.A.'s exhaustive review of this recording in the June 1946 issue of *The Gramophone* (London).

Job was first performed, music only, at Norwich Festival, October 23, 1930, and the first stage performance was given by the Camargo Society, Cambridge Theatre, during the summer of 1931. R.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1052. \$4.85.

In October 1940, Columbia released an album of *The Rite of Spring* by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Stravinsky (M-417) and we accorded it superlative praise. Something seems to have changed in the intervening seven years, either the times, our ears, recording techniques, our conception of the music, or something—but this new Monteux version sounds infinitely better. Playing them side by side one is immediately impressed by a more revealing reproduction in the newer set. We believe this to be the best recording—for sheer sound—that RCA Victor has yet produced of the San Francisco Orchestra. The surfaces are good, too.

It is superfluous at this late date to point out Monteux's authority in interpreting this score. He presented its first performance in Paris in 1913, the world premiere of this ballet which proved to be a landmark in the history of music. And to this day he remains one of its greatest, if not, indeed, the very greatest, of all its many interpreters (including Stravinsky himself). Monteux's exposition of *Le Sacre* has met with critical acclaim everywhere, and we can add but one more sincere and emphatic vote in that direction.

Those who have an implacable dislike for this score have probably not even read this far; but for those who understand and appreciate this monumental work the present recording should be more than acceptable in every respect. It is the definitive waxing of *Le Sacre*. S.

Handel—arr. Beecham: *The Great Elopement*. The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-6295 to V-DB-6297). \$7.50.

When this set of discs was issued in England, H.M.V. supplied the following note:

"*The Great Elopement* is a ballet of which Sir Thomas Beecham has written the story and scenario. It consists of seventeen pieces, and the music is founded upon various numbers taken mostly from the operas of Handel, all of them re-scored for modern orchestra.

"The scene of the ballet is the city of Bath, at that time (the second half of the eighteenth century) one of the most fashionable pleasure resorts of Europe. The celebrated Beau Nash was the Master of Ceremonies, and the Director of Music was Thomas Linley, one of the most popular composers of the day.

"His daughter, Elizabeth, a beautiful girl and an accomplished singer, is sought in marriage by a local squire whose suit is unwelcome to her. There appears upon the scene a brilliant young stranger, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, as yet unknown to fame, but the future author of *The School for Scandal* and *The Rivals*. The two young people fall in love, to the chagrin of Linley as well as the squire, and, with the assistance of the sympathetic Beau Nash, elope to London."

Sir Thomas has selected music that seems to fit the sentimental and amusing plot perfectly. It is lovely and tuneful, and the six sides of these discs are finished long before one gets enough of these fascinating melodies. The urge is to replace them on the phonograph and hear them again. We suspect that persons who secure this album will play it many, many times before they get tired of it. Most of the music will be new to them and as presented by Sir Thomas, with no stint of loving care and always with impeccable taste, it is a most delightful musical experience.

As the reproduction is superb and the record surfaces as smooth as glass, we can heartily recommend this album without reservations of any kind. R.

Suppé: Fatinitza—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc. (V-11-9261). \$1.

When most persons think of Franz von Suppé, they think of his *Poet and Peasant Overture*, forgetting that his compositions ran into the hundreds. Here is a lively overture that was new to us and one that will probably be new to many of our readers.

It is played with fine spirit by the Boston "Pops" and nicely recorded by RCA Victor. If you would like some tuneful music for an idle hour, here it is.

String Time. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-663. \$4.

One might say that Morton Gould has taken the themes from each of these popular pieces and developed a series of "rhapsodies for strings." In no case is any of them just Mr. Gould's arrangement of the original melody; he has taken the melody for his theme and developed a little symphonic piece for strings. Although there is considerable sameness to all of them, they are quite novel and those who are interested in Mr. Gould's work in this direction will doubtless find the present album quite fascinating. We can well imagine that these recordings might be very suitable for playing over the sound systems of the better class restaurants.

The selections that Mr. Gould has chosen for his "String Time" album are: *Laura*; *Solitude*; *Body and Soul*; *Stormy Weather*; *Holiday for Strings*; *Sophisticated Lady*; *The Surrey With the Fringe on Top*; and *Over the Rainbow*.

Manhattan Moods. Eddie LeMar and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-43. \$3.15.

Eddie LeMar, the very clever pianist, directs his orchestra from the piano in some most sophisticated interpretations of these well-known show tunes. The whole thing smacks of Broadway after dark, and those who find this style of music fascinating will surely get a great kick out of this album.

The selections that Eddie has chosen are: *Anything Goes*; *I Married an Angel*; *Fine and Dandy*; *You Do Something to Me*; *You're a Builder Upper*; *She Didn't Say Yes*; *The Lady is a Tramp*; and *I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plan*.

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onégin—Waltz (Act II) and Polonaise (Act III). The Hallé Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-71929D). \$1.

Last month RCA Victor released a recording of these pleasing Tchaikovsky selections by the London Philharmonic conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. We really don't need two modern recordings of them, even if they are tuneful and popular little pieces. However, as they are now available, we may as well take our choice. Our choice is the Beecham recording. Readers may not agree with us, but then that is what makes horse racing—a difference of opinion.

Rismky-Korsakov: Russian Easter Overture, Op. 36. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-276. \$3.

Review copy received too late to be covered in this issue.

CONCERTO



Dvorák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104 (for violoncello and orchestra). Gregor Piatigorsky (violin-cello) with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-658. \$6.

The Dvorák *Violoncello Concerto* makes its first appearance in the current Columbia catalog with this splendid recording. Columbia, years ago had a fine reading of this work by Emanuel Feuermann, although the orchestral support was not too good (this same performance was later pressed by Decca). Other recordings are by Gaspar Cassadó on Telefunken and Pablo Casals on Victor (M-458). All of the four recordings made of this work are good, Casals being especially so, mainly because of the fine orchestral support by Szell and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. The present set benefits by high fidelity reproduction as well as Ormandy's excellent accompaniment, for he is admittedly one of the best accompanists among our conductors. Piatigorsky plays this romantic work for all it is worth, and we even felt at times as though he was playing it for more than its worth. Occasionally his impassioned playing of passages becomes a shade rough in tone or pitch. But these are few, and the overall impression is one of a deeply-felt interpretation.

Although composed in America, the *Violoncello Concerto* was inspired by Dvorák's yearning to return to his native land, which he did shortly after this composition (1895). It is a splendid example of concerto form, with three movements of conventional tempi. The second movement, *Adagio ma non troppo*, is serene and reflective and Piatigorsky turns many smooth passages of luscious tonal quality.

Of Dvorák's large output we would not rate this concerto above or equal to his *Second, Fourth, and Fifth Symphonies* (all on records by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra), the *Slavonic Dances*, *Carneval Overture*, or "*American*" *Quartet*, at least as far as being interesting is concerned. But it is a good concerto with an eloquent and well-written 'cello part. The new recording is welcome and a fine addition to Columbia's catalog. And, lest we forget, the surfaces on our set were very good. S.

Chopin: Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Seven sides, and **Chopin: Berceuse in D flat, Op. 57.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1012. \$4.85.

The *Concerto No. 2 in F minor* is not perhaps the fullest flowering of Chopin's genius, for it was written when the composer was only 19. Nevertheless, it bears all the signposts, which point with no deviation at the development of one of the world's greatest musicians.

Chopin performed his *Concerto No. 2* for the first time in Warsaw on March 17, 1830. This event also marked the occasion of his public debut, and it seems almost incredible to read that a *Divertissement for French Horn* by one C. Goerner was played between the second and third movements of the *Concerto*!

This work has been recorded before: by Marguerite Long and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (CM-143), and by Alfred Cortot and the London Symphony. In the present set Artur Rubinstein and the NBC Symphony Orchestra, directed by William Steinberg are the artists. This is indeed fortunate, as not only does the actual recording outdistance all previous ones by a considerable margin, but Mr. Rubinstein is a great Chopin stylist and plays this music, very properly, as though to the manner born. If there could be a criticism leveled at his brilliant work, it would be that he is at times a little nonchalant and matter-of-fact, as though the *Concerto No. 2* were an old story to him.

The recording is more brilliant than mellow in type. The piano stands out over the orchestra, which is as it should be, for Chopin's orchestration is not too interesting. Mr. Steinberg proves an able accompanist.

On the eighth side, Mr. Rubinstein offers the *Berceuse in D-Flat, Opus 57*, which he plays very beautifully. D.

Francaix: Concertino for Piano and Orchestra. Jean Francaix (piano) with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leo Borchard. 1-12" disc (RF-R70071). \$2.50.

Those who have been collecting records for some years will probably remember this recording when it appeared in this country about eight or nine years ago under the Telefunken label. The present disc was very likely dubbed from the imported record.

This clever little piece was quite popular in France and Germany before World War II and was greeted with high praise by many important Continental critics. It is modern in conception, without being extreme, and abounds in lovely little melodies. Its weakness is in the thinness of its orchestral part, not that the orchestral score lacks interest, but one cannot help feeling that Francaix is primarily a writer for his solo instrument.

If you would like a little music that is quite unusual and tuneful, you will find it well played and splendidly recorded on this non-breakable Vinylite disc.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Nine sides, and **Chopin Impromptu No. 3 in G flat, Op. 51.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set V-6. \$10.85.

In October 1946, RCA Victor released this outstanding recording on shellac discs. It received a glowing review in these columns by Mr. de Schauen-

see and the sales were tremendous. A number of collectors expressed a desire to have this recording on Vinylite records and so RCA Victor is making it thus available this month.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Quintet in A major for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581. Reginald Kell (clarinet) and the Philharmonia String Quartet. 4-12" discs (C-DX-1187 to C-DX-1190) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence C-DX-8206 to C-DX-8209). \$8.

When this recording was released in England in May 1945, it was given the highest praise both for the performance and the reproduction. Some critics thought that it was a fine example of English chamber music recording at its best. Last year a few copies of it reached America and those collectors who were fortunate enough to secure one boasted of it to their friends and thus there was created quite a demand for these discs in this country. A recent shipment from England contained copies in both manual and automatic sequence. This news will probably cause quite a stir among collectors of chamber music recordings.

The opus itself is well-known and is considered among Mozart's finest chamber works. Recordings of it have been made by Benny Goodman and the Budapest Quartet, Simon Bellison and the Roth Quartet, and Charles Draper and the Léner Quartet. We are familiar with all of these earlier versions and we do not hesitate to state that, in our opinion, the present recording far outshines all of them in both performance and reproduction. Here is a chamber music recording that rates with the very best.

R.

CHORAL



Handel: Messiah (complete recording). Huddersfield Choral Society, Isobel Baillie (soprano), Gladys Ripley (contralto), James Johnston (tenor), Norman Walker (bass) and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 19-12" discs in two albums, with libretto and case. Columbia Set M-666. \$22.50.

It seems entirely fitting that Great Britain—the land of oratorio—should give us this fine new recording of Handel's acknowledged masterpiece, *Messiah*. The present performance, offered on thirty-eight record sides in two albums, is "a complete concert performance." All fifty-three numbers are included, with the exception of Nos. 34 through 36 and Nos. 49 through 52, which are usually omitted from presentations of this work.

In 1789, at the instigation of Baron Von Swieten, Mozart scored additional orchestral accompaniments for *Messiah* for a performance in Vienna. These accompaniments were intended for use when there was no organ available, but they are now in fairly general use for all presentations of the oratorio, and are included in the present recording.

Heretofore we had a nearly complete version of Handel's oratorio by Sir Thomas Beecham and various forces (CM-271). That set's fifteen years of age hardly allows it a fair competition with the present magnificent recording.

Here we have the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Malcolm Sargent, the Huddersfield Choral Society, and for soloists, Isobel Baillie, soprano; Gladys Ripley, contralto; James Johnston, tenor, and Norman Walker, bass. None of these soloists seems particularly outstanding, but all are strong in the Handelian tradition. Miss Baillie is the possessor of one of those pure, boy-soprano type of voices which is more acceptable in the British Isles than anywhere else. She displays considerable fluency in *Rejoice Greatly*. Gladys Ripley is no Louise Homer or Clara Butt, but she is a conscientious, sensitive singer with a thoroughly serviceable voice. James Johnston and Norman Walker have the style for the recitatives and the flexibility for the Handelian scale-passages. The Chorus is massive and beautifully recorded in such great moments as *For Unto Us a Child is Born* and *Hallelujah!*

This is in every sense a fine, solid performance of Handel's oratorio, recorded with remarkable fidelity and balance. These albums will mark a step forward in the recording of massive, accumulated forces.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Pergolesi: Stabat Mater. (Sung in Latin.) Joan Taylor (soprano), Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), The Nottingham Oriana Choir and Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Roy Henderson. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-13. \$11.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) utilized his brief span of existence to write considerable church music as well as opera. In a life which was nine years shorter than Mozart's, he managed to produce two works which have kept his name safe from oblivion—his comic opera, *Le Serva Padrona*, and his oratorio, the *Stabat Mater*. Both of these works enjoy occasional performances today and these, with the songs *Se tu m'ami* and *Nina* (about whose authorship there seems to be considerable dispute), constitute this musician's greatest claim to lasting fame.

Here we have a very fine recorded performance of the eloquent *Stabat Mater*, reproduced on English Decca with the new ffrf (full frequency range records) technique employed. The forces assembled are the Nottingham Oriana Choir and the Boyd Neel String Orchestra under the direction of Roy Henderson, and for soloists, Joan Taylor, soprano, and Kathleen Ferrier, contralto.

The reproduction of this music is amazingly fine. It places the previous version of the Vienna Choir Boys (VM-545) quite in the shade from every standpoint.

The Choir is realistically and most sensitively recorded, while the balance is a model of careful

supervision. Neither of the soloists is particularly distinguished, Miss Ferrier being the more satisfactory of the two.

When all is said and done, it is Pergolesi's music which emerges and which benefits from such superb reproduction. The set should stir up considerable interest. D.

New Songs of Palestine. International Chorus conducted by A. W. Binder. 3-10" discs in album. Keynote Set K-139. \$3.

The information regarding this remarkable album was gleaned from the notes that were supplied by the publisher. It contains songs that are being sung in Palestine today. These songs are of new hope for the rehabilitation of the Jewish people as a nation, songs which are the vibrant expressions of a people with a desire to sing. There is democracy in these songs. They do not sing of kings and princes, but rather of the land, of work and hope, and of the destiny of the Jewish people. Their texts embrace a wide range of human emotions and they have rhythms which are exuberant and buoyant, unlike the droll and stagnant rhythms of most of the European ghetto songs. The text of each song in Hebrew with an English translation appears on the inside of the covers of this album.

Professor A. W. Binder, who arranged and conducted these songs, has been active in all fields of music for many years. He is particularly known as a collector and arranger of Palestinian folk songs. In 1916 he conducted the first chorus to sing such songs in this country (the Hadassah Choral Union), and in 1924 and 1931 he visited Palestine. At present he is Professor of Liturgical Music at the Jewish Institute of Religion, Musical Director of the Free Synagogue, and Director of Music at the 92nd Street branch of the Y.M.H.A., in New York City.

It would seem from the above that the present recording should be authentic and we can state from our own knowledge that the chorus that makes them is a well-trained one consisting of excellent voices. The reproduction is satisfactory but the surfaces of the sample records sent us are none too smooth.

Bach: Cantata No. 106—God's Time is Best. (Sung in English). Members of the Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society with chamber orchestra and harpsichord conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth. 3-12" discs in album, with vocal score. Technichord Set T-6. (Automatic sequence only). \$7.55.

Technichord is responsible, this month, for an excellent recording of Bach's *Cantata 106: God's Time is Best*. Twenty-one members of the Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society, plus a chamber orchestra with harpsichord under the direction

of G. Wallace Woodworth, conductor, are the forces employed in this worthwhile undertaking.

This work was in all likelihood composed at Weimar in 1711. A funeral service was in every probability the occasion that enlisted the first performance of this intricate contrapuntal composition. For in form and style the cantata adheres to the earlier Baroque dictums of the 17th century.

Beginning with a *Sonatina* for orchestra, the cantata in turn employs the various choral sections—tenor, bass, alto and soprano—and finally combines them in a tremendous contrapuntal outburst, *All Glory, Praise and Majesty to God the Father Forever Be!*

The cantata, recorded on unbreakable red Vinylite is admirable—smooth and realistic. The balance—no easy matter in music of this kind—is worthy of special commendation. D.

Set Down, Servant (Spiritual arr. Shaw). One side, and **Soon—A Will Be Done** (Spiritual arr. Dawson). The Collegiate Choral conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-10" disc (V-10-1277). 75c.

Two highly stylized versions of these spirituals that did not appeal to us—they smack of Hollywood or a super-duper radio presentation. When it comes to spirituals we prefer a much simpler treatment. There is no question but that the Collegiate Choral is composed of a group of excellent singers and that it has the benefit of splendid direction under the very able Robert Shaw, but we just wish that Mr. Shaw had chosen some other type of music for his chorus.

OPERA

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz (complete recording). (Sung in Italian). Pia Tassinari, Ferruccio Tagliavini, Amalia Pini, Saturno Meletti, Armando Giannotti, Pier Latinucci, Giulia Bersona, Chorus and Orchestra of E.I.A.R. conducted by Pietro Mascagni. 13-12" discs, with libretto and albums (manual sequence only) (Cetra CB-20316 to CB-20328). \$40.17.

Following hard on the heels of both Victor and Columbia's announcement that they are to undertake the recording of complete operas in the immediate future, is the appearance of this complete operatic release by Cetra. The event is most welcome, for it is certain that neither Victor nor Columbia would ever be inspired to issue a complete recording of this opera—Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*.

Much has been said and written to the effect that Mascagni is a one-opera composer, meaning his immortal *Cavalleria Rusticana*. However, if you will hear performances of *Iris*, *Isabeau* and *L'Amico Fritz*, you will see that this statement is not quite true.

L'Amico Fritz is a charming opera with lovely melodies that are conceived in an Italian pastoral mood. There are engaging arias, duets and choral

numbers and the orchestration has decided appeal. It is not great music, but it is likely to generate one's affection for it.

L'Amico Fritz was first produced in 1891 (a year after *Cavalleria*). The Metropolitan gave it with Emma Calvé in 1894, but it failed to last for more than a single performance. More successful was the Metropolitan's second attempt on November 15, 1923 with Lucrezia Bori, Miguel Fleta and Giuseppe Danise, which proved one of the admired soprano's most happy undertakings with the role of the heroine Suzel.

The present recording is of special interest because the performance was not only supervised, but also conducted by the composer himself, the octogenarian Pietro Mascagni. A recent renaissance of Mascagni's little opera in Italy, we are told, was largely due to the popularity of the young tenor Ferruccio Tagliavini in the title-role. Mr. Tagliavini, who is here very much present, is said to have won the particular plaudits of the composer. Hearing his work in this album, it is not difficult to see just why he so pleased the aged Mascagni. The tenor's voice sounds just right in this music, and his singing of *Ed anche Beppe m'amo*, and other arias is very beautiful.

Even more pleasing to this reviewer is the lovely voice of Pia Tassinari in the role of Suzel. Mme. Tassinari's is a lyric soprano in the Bori tradition. Her phrasing is the acme of refinement, and so is her diction. Both she and Signor Tagliavini make the most of their opportunities in the delightful *Duetto delle Ciliege* (Duet of the Cherries), which is the most popular moment of the score.

Saturno Meletti is the possessor of an exciting baritone voice for the important part of Rabbi David, while Amalia Pini's rich mezzo-soprano sounds well in the music of the gypsy boy, Beppe.

Signor Mascagni conducts his opera with fire and authority, and the recording is vivid and excellent. The surfaces are admirable. A refreshing and not every-day experience is a hearing of this charming little opera!

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Rigoletto—Pari siamo! (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—Cortigiani, vil razza dannata (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9413). \$1.

Leonard Warren is gaining continually in stature in the realm of opera. His appearances with the Metropolitan receive ever greater acclaim. The present disc, containing two popular baritone operatic selections certainly cannot help adding to this celebrity. They are beautifully and artistically sung, and his full and well-modulated voice shows to fine advantage. The reproduction has been faithfully accomplished by RCA Victor.

Puccini: La Boheme—Si, mi chiamano Mimi (Act I). (Sung in German). One side, and **Donizetti: Linda di Chamounix**—O luce di quest' anima (Sung in Italian). Erna Sack (soprano) with Berlin Opera Orchestra conducted by Willy Czernik. 1-12" disc (RFR70075). \$2.50.

Erna Sack's many admirers in this country will doubtless find this record quite exciting. Of particular interest will be the coloratura aria from Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix*, which gives Miss Sack a grand opportunity to demonstrate her superb voice and her marvelous technique. The present disc is made of non-breakable Vinylite.



VOCAL

Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op. 31. Peter Pears (tenor), Dennis Brain (horn), and the Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-7. \$7.

Benjamin Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings* is an original composition. It begins and ends with a Prologue and Epilogue in which an unaccompanied horn solo threads its way mysteriously. It is salutary to realize that the set of poems Britten has used for the text of his fairly lengthy composition are among the best in one language. Keats, Tennyson, Ben Jonson, Blake, and other giants of our literature have supplied the composer with his texts. In a day when so much sheer tripe is set to music, it is refreshing to find an Anglo-Saxon composer who makes use of a priceless heritage which others ignore.

The *Serenade* is divided into six sections: a Pastoral, a Nocturne, an Elegy, a Dirge, a Hymn and a Sonnet. Striking among these are the Nocturne which is in reality Tennyson's *Blow Bugle Blow!* and the Hymn, which is Ben Jonson's *Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair*. The former has echo effects in the horn phrases, while the latter seems to have captured the Elizabethan atmosphere to perfection. Even more striking, and positively weird in its insistent repetition, is Dirge, which boasts an anonymous 15th Century setting.

The *Serenade* is odd music; it is more distinctive than actually modern or trail-blazing. The artists are excellent. Peter Pears, who also recorded Britten's *Michelangelo Sonnets*, is once again present. Mr. Pears' voice is rather thin and lacking in beauty. Nevertheless, in music of this type, it is an admirable and effective instrument, capable of interesting colors. The tenor's diction is fairly clear, though, considering such masterpieces as Keats' Sonnet and William Blake's Elegy, a John McCormack type of crystal-clear diction would have been wholly desirable. Mr. Brain's horn playing is the acme of smoothness, while the Boyd Neel String Orchestra supplies a lovely background.

The actual recording which employs the new Decca frr (full frequency range records) is a model of clear and sanely balanced reproduction. Surfaces, like most British products, are amazingly smooth.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Balfe: The Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me (Act III). One side, and **Marshall: I Hear You Calling Me**. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1276). 75c.

Olcott-Ball: Mother Machree. One side, and **MacMurrrough: Machusla**. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1279). 75c.

The late beloved John McCormack's one and only pupil adds two lovely records to his short list of recordings, and as one listens to them, it is easy to realize why Mr. McCormack said: "The best voice that I have heard in twenty-five years, the one most likely to follow me. . . ." Old timers will remember that McCormack made recordings of all four of these selections and that they were among his best selling discs. We rather believe that Christopher Lynch's modern versions will also enjoy a rather wide sale. Such ballads appeal strongly to the great mass of the people and Mr. Lynch sings them in a manner that is bound to please. The reproduction and the record surfaces are excellent.

Sincerely Yours. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-654. \$4.

It seems that many of Miss Stevens' admirers have written to the Columbia Company requesting that she record some of the old favorites—songs that everyone knows. Miss Stevens has done just that and captioned her album "Sincerely Yours." Sylvan Shulman, who directs the accompanying orchestra, has made special arrangements of these familiar selections. Miss Stevens sings them very nicely and we are sure that her friends will be delighted with this group of discs.

The songs chosen for this album are: *Homing; The Rosary; Somewhere a Voice is Calling; At Dawning; Trees; The Sweetest Story Ever Told; A Dream; and Love's Old Sweet Song*.

Americana. Earl Robinson with guitar accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Keynote Set K-132. \$3.

Earl Robinson, famous for his *Ballad for Americans*, decides to sing some American folk songs that he says "need singin'." He supplies his own guitar accompaniments, although his foreword tells us that he "never really learned to play the guitar." This album is quite informal, but it is genuine in spirit, for certainly there is no one more sincerely interested in American folk music than Earl Robinson. The short sketch he gives us of his life on the inside

cover of this album tells of that interest. His notes on each of the songs that he sings indicate the reason that he thinks they "need singin'."

The titles of the songs in this unusual album are: *The House I Live In; The Frozen Logger; Jefferson and Liberty; Sweet Betsy From Pike; Dirty Miner; A Man's a Man for a' That; and Drill Ye Tarriers Drill*.

Mahler: Wer hat dies Liedlin erdacht? One side, and **Franz: Zwei welke Rosen, Op. 13, No. 1**. (Sung in German). Mary Paull (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Kenneth Hieber. 1-10" disc (Vanguard-3). \$1.

This little disc is attractive because it contains two beautiful songs that are not presently available on records—one by Gustav Mahler and the other by Robert Franz. As but few songs by these 19th century composers have been recorded, those who are interested in German lieder will wish to investigate this disc. They have been nicely sung by Mary Paull. Miss Paull has a pleasing voice of fair quality. The reproduction is passable but the record surfaces are none too smooth.

Irish Songs. James Melton (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by David Broekman. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1090. \$3.85.

Just in time for St. Patrick's Day, James Melton sings a group of well-beloved Irish ballads. As one would expect, he does them very nicely, and RCA Victor has been very successful with the recording.

Mr. Melton has chosen the following songs for this album: *Mother Machree; The Rose of Tralee; Machusla; She Moved Through the Fair; Kathleen Mavourneen; and The Minstrel Boy*.

Schubert: Die Forelle, Op. 32. One side, and **Mozart: Warnung, K. 433**. (Sung in German). Erna Sack (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Willy Czernik. 1-10" disc (RF-8371). \$1.25.

Erna Sack turns from her usual coloratura arias to German lieder without too much success. Her admirers will doubtless find her interpretations interesting but the more conservative music lovers will feel that they are not quite orthodox. The reproduction of the piano accompaniments is pretty poor—the piano at times sounds like a well-tuned group of kettle-drums.

Scott: Lullaby, Op. 57, No. 2. One side, and **Bucky: Hear the Wind Whispering**. Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-10" disc (V-10-1260). 75c.

Miss Anderson adds these two lovely little unhackneyed songs to her recorded repertory. They are very welcome and lovers of fine vocal recordings will find them well worth investigation. Nicely recorded.

ORGAN



Organ Recital. Charles M. Courboin (playing the organ of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1091. \$3.85.

Mozart—arr. Courboin: *Ave Verum*. One side, and *Jesus, My Lord and Holy God, We Praise Thy Name* (both transcribed and arranged by Courboin from the Catholic Church Hymnal). (V-11-9402).

Arcadelt—arr. Courboin: *Ave Maria*. One side, and McGrath: *Adoration*. (V-11-9403).

Gruber—arr. Courboin: *Silent Night*. One side, and *O Lord I am Not Worthy* (Communion hymn) and *Hail, Glorious St. Patrick* (from the Catholic Church Hymnal). (Both transcribed and arranged by Courboin). (V-11-9404).

A hearty welcome to the first in a new series of organ records by Courboin—one of the very finest organists of our day. There is no one superior to Courboin as a master of phrasing and coloring. Every record side in this album has enviable examples of phrasing that distinguish this man's work from that of other organists.

The selections chosen for this album are undoubtedly aimed at a large cross-section of record buyers who like organ music but are unfamiliar with standard organ classics. We imagine organists will not care too much for the music chosen, and if they acquire the album it will be because of Courboin's technique or the St. Patrick's organ. But there must be a multitude who will devour this fare once they hear the superlative way Courboin renders it. For here is music that is easy to listen to, most of it familiar, played on a magnificent organ by a man who draws color from an organ masterfully and shades it like an orchestra conductor.

Courboin's arrangements of the Mozart and Arcadelt numbers are very warm and at moments almost theatrical. His conception of *Silent Night* includes some original harmony that is exquisite, and the chimes used for a verse are in perfect pitch (for a change). He has also transcribed three hymns from the Catholic Church Hymnal and plays them in what we would call interesting concert arrangements (with more of that aforementioned masterly phrasing). *O Lord, I am Not Worthy* is a Communion hymn, also in Courboin's transcription. The one original organ composition in the collection is by a former pupil of Dr. Courboin, and is a charming number written around the Gregorian *Ave Maria*.

In addition to quiet surfaces, RCA Victor has achieved fine reproduction of the St. Patrick's organ. Courboin has had this organ rebuilt (it needed it), and he displays its resources well. The full organ,

which he uses a couple of times, has a glorious ring. Most of the album is of a soft reflective nature, but every note is clearly heard and the perspective of a large cathedral has been captured beautifully. Anyone who loves beautiful organ tone will want to hear this set. S.

Piston: Prelude and Allegro. E. Power Biggs (organ) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-9262). \$1.

Every once in a while an unusual record of rare beauty and value comes along. Such a record is the present one containing Walter Piston's *Prelude and Allegro* played by E. Power Biggs with the Boston Symphony directed by Serge Koussevitzky. The recording was made in Symphony Hall (Boston) and the organ used is the Hutchings instrument that was installed when the hall was built in 1900.

Mr. Piston's present work is in the classic manner. It is tuneful and is just the sort of music that most anyone can enjoy. In fact, to us it is reminiscent of Mozart. Mr. Biggs, as usual, plays it with loving care and in the best of taste. RCA Victor has achieved a most faithful recording. Therefore, we have nothing but praise for this disc, and we surely hope that the sales will encourage RCA Victor to issue more such recordings.

This unusual work dates from 1943 and was dedicated to Mr. Biggs, who gave it its first performance on one of his Sunday CBS broadcasts. Dr. Koussevitzky has included it several times in his programs both in concerts and over the air. It was featured when Dr. Koussevitzky was made an honorary Associate of the American Guild of Organists in April 1946.

PIANO



Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-10. \$7.

All previous recordings of Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* may now take a back seat. Lucette Descaves and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Bigot offered a well-performed version on RCA Victor M-725 released in January 1941. But it is just no match for the clear, colorful, and revealing reproduction offered in this English Decca ffr set. And the surfaces are as smooth as any we have heard—surpassing some Vinylites. Added to this mechanical perfection we have a performance that sends out all the perfume of this irresistible music.

Nights in the Gardens of Spain—what an enchanting title—comprises three nocturnes for piano and orchestra. The piano is used much as an instrument of the orchestra, for it is not used as the solo instrument of a concerto. However, the piano part is of

great beauty and importance; the figures and ornaments called for in the piano part demand a virtuoso performance. The three movements are titled: *At Generalife* (the garden of the artist—on a hillside overlooking the Alhambra, the most beautiful place in the whole of Granada), *A Far-a-way Dance*, and *In the Gardens of the Sierra of Cordova*. The music is based on the popular music of Andalucia, which Falla has refined and used freely to construct an expressive and mysterious work.

Clifford Curzon and the orchestra offer a deft and delicate reading of Manuel de Falla's minor masterpiece which will delight those who have fallen under its magical spell. Again we remind our readers of English Decca's irregular sized records. S.



DICTION

Let Us Pray. Pat O'Brien (speaking), with chorus conducted by Jack Brooks. 2-10" discs in album. Variety Set V-102. \$2.75.

From time to time unusual recordings reach the studio, but one of the most unusual is the present album containing a series of Catholic prayers described and recited by the well-known movie star, Pat O'Brien, with an unobtrusive musical background. The prayers were selected by Rev. E. V. Dailey, Editor and Publisher of *The New World*, with ecclesiastical approval. Mr. O'Brien's discourse is very impressive and the importance of prayer in the Christian life is reverently stressed. The recording has been successfully accomplished and should be of particular interest to Catholic families, especially those with young children who are presently learning the prayers of their Church.

Dumas: The Three Musketeers. Errol Flynn (speaking) with supporting cast and orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-659. \$5.

For those who would be interested in a recorded performance of *The Three Musketeers*, the present album is highly recommended. Dumas' famous story was arranged by Ralph Rose, who also directed the performance. A large and able cast supports Errol Flynn in this recorded version, and an appropriate musical background is supplied by an adequate orchestra under the direction of Carmen Dragon.

VIOLONCELLO



Frescobaldi: Arietta. One side, and **Milhaud: Elégie.** Edmund Kurtz (violoncello) with piano accompaniments by Artur Balsam. 1-12" disc (V-11-9414). \$1.

Edmund Kurtz, the distinguished violoncellist, whose fame on the concert stage is growing rapidly, has chosen two lovely pieces for this disc. One was

written several hundred years after the other (Frescobaldi 1583-1643, and Darius Milhaud 1892-). As fine violoncello recordings are not so plentiful, the present disc should be quite welcome. The selections have been beautifully played and the reproduction is first-class.

VIOLIN



Waxman: Carmen Fantasie. (Based on themes from Bizet's "Carmen"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 1-12" disc (V-11-9422). \$1.

If you like fine fiddling and the tuneful selections from *Carmen*, here is a record that you will think is mighty nice. Heifetz's playing and Bizet's tunes make a very attractive combination. Franz Waxman has done a good job in writing a piece for violin and orchestra based on the themes from one of the world's most popular operas—tunes that everyone can whistle. Mr. Waxman's opus has been given a grand performance and the reproduction is of the best.

Violin Recital. Zino Francescatti (violin) with piano accompaniments by Max Lanner. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-660. \$3.25.

Tartini—trans. Francescatti: Variations on a Theme of Corelli. One side, and **Shostakovich—arr. Grunes: Polka** (from "The Age of Gold"). (C-17404D).

Debussy—arr. Hartmann: La fille aux cheveux de lin. One side, and **Debussy—arr. Hartmann: Minstrels.** (C-17405D).

Schumann—trans. Heifetz: The Prophet Bird, Op. 82, No. 7. One side, and **Wieniawski Caprice in A minor.** (C-17406D).

Zino Francescatti has selected from his repertoire of encore material the six selections listed above and with the aid of his very talented accompanist, Max Lanner, gives a little recital that is bound to thrill all those music lovers who delight in fine violin playing. The recording has been very successfully accomplished.

CHILDREN



Adventures in Bibleland. Radio artists (speaking) with sound effects. 2-10" discs in album with pictures and text. Bibletone Set CH50. \$2.95.

This album contains the dramatized stories of "David and Goliath" and "Daniel in the Lion's Den." They are excitingly portrayed by an adequate cast of players. The aim seems to be to attract active red-blooded children of the present generation to the famous old stories of the Bible. There will probably be those who will feel these versions smack too much of the radio thrillers for children, so it might be well to hear a portion of these recordings before buying them.

MISCELLANEOUS



A Flamenco Concert. Sabicas (guitar). 3-10" discs in album. Keynote Set K-134. \$3.

Flamenco music, the music of the Spanish gypsies, is becoming more and more popular in this country, and the few albums that have been issued containing examples of it have all enjoyed substantial sales. The present album introduces Sabicas, a Spanish guitarist, sometimes called the Benny Goodman of the Spanish guitar, a self-taught player who learned his art from the beggars on the streets of his native Pamplona in Spain. Sabicas became the favorite accompanist of flamenco singers and dancers throughout Spain, and his many appearances in this country have gained a wide following here for him.

The selections that Sabicas has chosen for this album are: *Tanger Danza Amora*; *Malagueñas*; *Variaciones Clásicas de Farrucas*; *Aires de Cadiz Solea*; *Granadinas*; and *Gran Jota de Tarrega*.

The recording of Sabicas' guitar has been nicely accomplished but the surfaces of the sample records sent us are none too smooth.

Larry Adler and His Harmonica. Larry Adler (harmonica) with orchestra conducted by John Kirby and Georgie Stoll. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-486. \$3.75.

The hearts of Larry Adler's numerous fans are surely going to be warmed by this great batch of recordings by their favorite. Mr. Adler is certainly at the head of his profession as these discs amply demonstrate. Young boys, and old boys, too, who think they can play a harmonica will have something to shoot at when they listen to these discs.

The selections that Mr. Adler has chosen for this album are: *Start Dust*; *That Old Black Magic*; *St. Louis Blues*; *Blues in the Night*; *Clair de Lune*; *Hora Staccato*; *Begin the Beguine*; and *Hand to Mouth Boogie*.

Bliss: Baraza (Incidental music from British film "Men of Two Worlds"). Eileen Joyce (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra and male chorus conducted by Muir Mathieson. 1-12" disc (D-K1174). \$2.

On this disc we have an example of British film music at its best—a musical score by the distinguished English composer Arthur Bliss performed by the National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Muir Mathieson (famous for his "Warsaw Concerto" with male chorus, and the piano part in the able hands of Eileen Joyce. Also a fine example of English Decca recording.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Record Book (Complete Edition. Reprint). By David Hall. xvii+1063 pp. The Citadel Press (New York). Price \$2.98.

Modern Music. By Max Graf. Translated by Beatrice R. Maier. 320 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.

Two Worlds of Music. By Berta Geissmar. 327 pp. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 2

APRIL 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

It has been forty years since we have had a biography of Haydn in English. Since that time much research has been accomplished and therefore the present volume contains considerable matter that will be new to American readers. The author, Karl Geiringer, comes to his task well equipped after spending eight years as curator of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna—a center for research on Haydn for over fifty years. While we do not pose as an authority on "the father of the symphony," it would seem that the well-documented text has been carefully checked for factual accuracy.

Mr. Geiringer in arranging his matter, has done something that pleases us very much. He has divided his book into two practically equal parts. The first part covers the life of Haydn and the second part is devoted to a discussion of "all the authentic works that are important for the outlining of Haydn's artistic personality." By so doing, it is possible for the reader to have a running account of the composer's interesting and very active life without having the story continually broken with long appreciations of his various compositions. This plan has another advantage in that when one wishes to consider a work purely from the musical viewpoint he may find it set forth in the second section without a lot of extraneous matter.

We thoroughly enjoyed both sections. The author has a pleasing, one might almost say conversational, style in telling the story of Haydn's life, and as he never misses an opportunity of stressing the humor of a situation, his text fairly sparkles at times. His appreciation and description of the many works considered in the second section abound in pertinent and

illuminating facts, and one cannot help gaining much valuable information concerning the important compositions of one of the outstanding musicians of all times.

This book deserves an honored place beside the two excellent biographies by Herbert Weinstock of Handel and Tchaikovsky and the *Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach* edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel which have appeared within the last few years.

* * *

Riggs & Jeffreys, Inc., who are specialists in making chime recordings, have recently issued three albums of such records. Each album contains five 12-inch discs. The first album contains selections that are appropriate for Easter, and the other two, sacred selections that may be used throughout the year. Each record contains four selections, two on each side. The discs are made of non-breakable Vinylite. The albums are \$14.28 each (individual records may be purchased at \$3.33 each). A leaflet listing the records and the selections that each contains will be sent to anyone who is interested.

We have carefully tried these records and we can recommend them as the best electron bell chime recordings that we have heard. Churches and memorial parks that have amplifying systems should find them particularly satisfactory.

* * *

From time to time we receive inquiries about the availability of "Society Sets" which are issued in England in limited editions, such as the Beethoven Sonata Society, Beethoven Violin Sonata Society, Hugo Wolf Society, Sibelius Society and several others. Recently a large shipment of these unusual items arrived from abroad and we will be pleased to send to any of our readers, who request it, a list of the available albums. Several of the earlier volumes of

these societies are out-of-print and other volumes are only available in limited quantities, therefore, it is important that those persons who are interested should not delay in sending for the list mentioned above.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Prokofieff: Symphony No. 5, Op. 100. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1095. \$5.85.

This is the second recording to appear within three months of the Prokofieff *Symphony No. 5*. This past January Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York played it for Columbia, and now RCA Victor issues the same composition with Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. Frankly, two recordings of this symphony are entirely superfluous. It is an example of that unfortunate duplication which arises through the competition of two recording companies. If either Koussevitzky or Rodzinski had refrained from duplication and instead offered one of the many symphonies which remains unrecorded, we would be far better off. We can think of one of the later Roy Harris symphonies, or the Randall Thompson *Symphony No. 2*, or the symphonies of Krenikov, or Katchaturian's intriguing *Symphony No. 2*—any of these would have been preferable to a work which decidedly does not have to be represented by two different recordings.

The reviewer of this set (who was also the reviewer of the earlier Rodzinski release) can arouse little more enthusiasm than he did then for this long and seemingly little inspired work. Prokofieff is said to have announced that his symphony was "about the spirit of man"—a pretty safe and trite generalization. The second movement still seems the most satisfactory.

Koussevitzky, who is said to have a predilection for the music of Prokofieff, gives a more spirited performance than Rodzinski. There is more fire and

drive to his work. The recording is excellent—a splendid example of a 1947 symphonic recording of one of the country's foremost orchestras. D.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 4 in A minor, Op. 63. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-665. \$5.

Estimates of this symphony certainly vary: from "... incomparably his finest" (O'Connell) to "... a bogus mortar of stylistic mannerisms with which Sibelius pads out a few thematic fragments into a symphony movement" (Haggin). Columbia's publicity for this set includes the familiar statement "Sibelius himself once said of his iconoclastic musical idiom that whereas other composers served the public all sorts of musical cocktails, he offered it only a drink of cool water."

For us, a diet of cool water would tend to become a bit monotonous. However, water is enjoyable occasionally, so we listened to the *Fourth Symphony* again, and tried to be refreshed. Columbia's cool drink of water is well served by Rodzinski, and also by the recording engineers. Whatever we might venture in comparison of Rodzinski's reading with Beecham's or Stokowski's would gain nothing. Those persons who are deeply devoted to the aqueous *Fourth* will insist on hearing it out for themselves.

Anyone unfamiliar with this raw, rugged landscape will want to hear the work before purchasing it. Those who like the *First* and *Second Symphonies* of the Finnish master will find a totally different type of music in his *Fourth*, if, indeed, they find any music at all. The characteristic growlings in the bass, snorts from the brass section, and fragments of melody in the strings which occur in all Sibelius' works, are actually about the *only* things which occur in the *Fourth*. But we must admit, that when we had finished playing this album, it somehow appeared that the music hangs together.

We will go on record as saying that Rodzinski's reading, the reproduction, and the quiet surfaces, all serve the music well, but we will not go on record to evaluate the worth of the music, only to say we find it interesting—and cool. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Russian Easter Overture, Op. 36. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-276. \$3.

Those of us who remember the first electrical recordings will doubtless recall the great thrill we received when the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Stokowski recorded this selection for Victor. Nearly everyone who purchased an Orthophonic Victrola purchased this pair of discs and used them to demonstrate his wonderful new instrument. That was nearly a score of years ago and the Stokowski version, made at that time, has enjoyed wide popularity through the years, despite the fact that

he made a later recording of this work with the NBC Symphony. In the NBC version Stokowski substituted a tenor voice for the trombones' playing of the chant, which spoiled it for us and doubtless for many other music lovers.

Now we have a modern version by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of its present musical director, Eugene Ormandy. It is, in our opinion, the best recording from a reproduction standpoint that Columbia has made of the Philadelphia Orchestra since that sterling organization came under its banner several years ago. Here in the home city, there has been some criticism of Columbia's recordings of the Philadelphians. It was thought by quite a number of persons that Columbia was not as successful in catching the superb string tone of the orchestra as RCA Victor had been previously. We doubt if there will be any such criticism of the present recording. We rather believe that the conservative music lovers of our Quaker city, who resist any change, even the change of their orchestra from the RCA Victor to the Columbia label, will join the rest of the music lovers of the country in proclaiming this a very fine reproduction of the Philadelphia Orchestra. R.

Dohnanyi: Suite in F sharp minor, Op. 19. Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-433. \$3.85.

Some fifteen or twenty years ago the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of the late Frederick Stock made a recording of this suite for Victor, which we do not believe is presently available. While this work is tuneful and is based on original melodies, it never seemed to particularly take hold with American music lovers. We often wondered why; it is certainly lively enough and pleasant to listen to. Perhaps this modern recording will revive interest in it. We feel that it is worthy of investigation by the discerning and so recommend it. The Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles under the able direction of Alfred Wallenstein gives a spirited and highly satisfactory performance and the reproduction is first-class.

Stravinsky Fireworks, Op. 4. One side and Fauré: *Pelléas et Mélisande*—*Sicilienne* (No. 3). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désire Defauw. 1-12" disc (V-11-9447). \$1.

A month or so ago there was a recording of Stravinsky's *Fireworks* issued with the composer directing the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York. It filled the last side in the album set containing that composer's *Firebird Suite*. However, we know of no domestic recording of *Sicilienne*, which is the third section of Fauré's incidental music to Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. If we were going to add this disc to our library, it would be the Fauré selection that would sway our decision.

Mozart: Symphony No. 20 in D, K. 133. Vox Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 171. \$4.85.

This set is indeed a pleasant surprise. After postponing the playing of this set for several weeks, we decided to try a side. At that point everything was dropped while we played the whole thing a few times. Here is a "new" Mozart symphony, recorded on Vinylite, in a splendid performance, with beautiful reproduction. At last Vox got into a hall somewhere, for this set has some room resonance which was lacking in their *Salzburg Serenades* and *Mozart Minuets* sets (excellent as they are). There is certainly no annoying echo; but that desirable quality of tone imparted by a hall seems to be present. The surfaces are truly fine too, which is a distinct departure for Vox.

We cannot imagine anyone not being completely charmed by the second movement of this little gem, an *Andante*, scored for strings and flute only, with the first and second violins muted and the remainder of the string choir open. It is irresistible music, and Fendler does it with consummate finesse. The other three movements, with woodwinds and brass, are played with spirit and precision, for this Vox Chamber Orchestra is apparently made up of first-class players.

It is unbelievable that Mozart wrote this symphony before he was sixteen, and it is equally surprising that it has never before been recorded and is so seldom played (we never heard of it before). Congratulations to Vox for this album, which has our enthusiastic approval and unqualified endorsement. S.

Novello: Perchance to Dream—Potpourri. Charles Shadwell and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-C-3501). \$1.90.

Charles Shadwell is a very popular conductor of light music in his native England and as far as we know this is the first record of his to reach our shores. Mr. Shadwell has chosen selections from Ivor Novello's musical play *Perchance to Dream* for this disc. It is tuneful music that is mighty pleasant to listen to and it has been splendidly recorded. This record contains some very nice light music that will probably be new to most American record collectors.

Tauber: Ballade for Orchestra. One side, and Tauber: *Break of Day* (Intermezzo Symphonique from "Old Chelsea"). The George Melachrino Orchestra conducted by Richard Tauber. 1-12" disc. (C-DX-1256). \$2.

Here is a novelty. Richard Tauber, the famous Austrian tenor, appears on this disc as composer and conductor. We doubt if many persons know that Mr. Tauber was a conductor at the age of eighteen, several years before Carl Beines discovered his voice and trained him for his operatic career. The selections on the present disc remind one of mood music for the movies of the better kind. It is pleasing to listen to and we presume that Mr. Tauber's many

admirers will be interested in this record. Reproduction—excellent.

Rawsthorne: "Street Corner" Overture. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 1-12" disc (V-C-3502). \$1.90.

This disc will probably introduce to many American record collectors the English composer, Alan Rawsthorne (1905-). Mr. Rawsthorne did not begin the serious study of music until he was twenty years of age and it is only recently that his works have attracted wide attention. The present selection, while not of great importance, is quite interesting. It is bright and cheerful and contains several well-turned tunes. It has the benefit of a spirited performance and has been splendidly recorded.

For those who like to wander from the beaten path, this disc should be quite tempting.

Sinigaglia: Danza Piemontese in A, Op. 31, No. 1. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9446). \$1.

This is the first of two Piedmontese Dances that make up Opus 31 of the Italian composer Leone Sinigaglia (1868-). Although this orchestral work has gained some popular favor, this is the first time that it has appeared on records; in fact, if memory serves us correctly this is the first Sinigaglia composition to be recorded in this country. Sinigaglia is a profound student of the folklore of the Piedmont district of his native Italy and the present work is based on genuine popular themes of that area. It is pleasing music to listen to and as it will probably be new to many record collectors, this disc should enjoy a reasonably wide sale. This should be particularly true because of the fine rendition that the Boston "Pops" has supplied on this record. Reproduction—excellent.

Rossini: William Tell—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (RF-R70073). \$2.50.

Perhaps some of our older readers will remember this recording that was released under the Telefunken label before World War II. The present disc was probably dubbed from that recording. If you would like to have a record of the old Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, here is an opportunity of securing a rather good one. It has been pressed on Vinylite.

Cailliet: Variations on "Pop! Goes the Weasel." Carnegie Pops Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-10" disc (C-4368M). 75c.

The Carnegie Pops Orchestra, a summer edition of the famous New York Philharmonic-Symphony, under the direction of Charles O'Connell, makes a grand recording of this fascinating little selection. The kiddies will love it. We seem to remember that the Boston "Pops" made a recording of it several years ago.

Purcell—arr. Wood: A Trumpet Voluntary. Alex Harris (Trumpet), Harold Dawber (organ) with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. One side, and **Davies: Solemn Melody.** Clyde Twelvetrees (violoncello), Harold Dawber (organ) with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. 1-12" disc (C-L-1986). \$2.

This unusual and highly pleasing record is listed in the domestic Columbia catalog but has not been available for several years. A recent shipment included a few copies of the imported version. If you have been wishing a copy, dealers specializing in imported discs will be able to supply you at this time.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus—Overture. Dresden State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4638). \$2.50.

We have heard many performance of this popular selection but we never heard one that even approaches this one. On this disc we have a fine orchestra conducted by a brilliant director, who is to the manner born. The result is a record that any dealer might use for demonstrating his new phonograph-combinations with splendid results.

Auber: Fra Diavolo—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (D-K1489). \$2.

Berlioz: Beatrice and Benedict—Overture. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (D-K1416). \$2.

Tchaikovsky: Opritschnik—Overture. One side, and **Bellini: Norma—Overture.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (D-K1291). \$2.

Auber: Masaniello—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Orlof. 1-12" disc (D-K1314). \$2.

Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clarence Raybould. 1-12" disc (D-K1315). \$2.

Decca is presenting an attractive lot of overtures. Many of these have been sought after by record collectors for a long time. All recorded at Kingsway Hall, London, with the Decca frr system, they represent a fine group of recordings that are not readily available elsewhere. Boult and the BBC Orchestra have done a couple which Victor had in their catalog; but at present we do not believe any recordings are available of these overtures except the present group.

Tchaikovsky's *Opritschnik* is a virtually forgotten opera, the overture of which is rather nice. It, and *Norma*, are well performed by Fistoulari, whose work we have previously admired on Decca records. He does the *Fra Diavolo* extremely well too, and this is a clever overture. The other Auber overture, *Masaniello*, is a melodious bit also. In fact, we rather liked these light works the best of the lot. Whatever you choose from this group, you may be assured of fine performances and top-notch reproduction, with good surfaces. S.

CONCERTO



Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22.

Moura Lympany (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-24. \$7.

Anyone interested in piano concertos may extend a hearty welcome to this set. We know of only two recordings ever before made of Saint-Saëns several piano concertos: de Greef's of the *Second* (VM-150) and Cortot's of the *Fourth* (VM-367). Cortot's *Fourth* was quite a fine one; however, de Greef's *Second* left much to be desired in every respect. The present recording of the *Second* on English Decca fills a gap in the library of high-fidelity recordings. Miss Lympany plays this work well, and her few mistakes here and there are completely eclipsed by her vital and exciting reading of this work. The concerto is technically difficult, and a perfect example of piano writing of the romantic school. Miss Lympany displays this pianistic writing brilliantly, many moments are really thrilling. Braithwaite supplies a sinewy accompaniment, with plenty of color and line. The closing bars of the last movement are remarkably well done, and the two final chords find the piano and orchestra precisely together.

The Saint-Saëns *Second Concerto* will immediately appeal to those who like the Grieg and Schumann concertos, for it may be compared to them for style and character. Obviously, it is not as lush and melodic as the more popular concertos, for if it were it would be performed more frequently; but it seems to us that it deserves more performances than it receives these days.

The reproduction, Decca frrr, is beautifully accomplished and balanced on quiet surfaces. We recommend this album from every standpoint—charming music, off the beaten track, fine interpretation and brilliant performance, colorful orchestral support, A-1 recording and surfaces. But we again remind our readers of the unconventional size of English Decca records as explained in the *Pétrouchka* review of a previous issue. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26. Dimitri Mitropoulos (piano) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-667. \$4.

A surprise is in store for those who do not realize that Dimitri Mitropoulos is a pianist of amazing technical resources as well as one of the foremost conductors of the present day. The surprise will lie amid the pages of this new album wherein is contained the Greek conductor's virtuoso performance of the Prokofiev *Concerto No. 3 in C Major for Piano and Orchestra*.

This reviewer has heard Mr. Mitropoulos perform the concerto in public on at least three different

occasions, so he knew what to expect. The present composition is not only one of the most important works in this form of the last 30 years, but it is a technical trap for the most seasoned pianist, making unbelievable demands on whatever technique he possesses.

That Mitropoulos can meet these requirements at all is amazing; that he can meet them with the unfailing brilliance and vitality, which are so saliently present, is even more so.

Prokofiev completed the concerto in October, 1921, and it was Chicago—a city that has always been unusually receptive to the Russian composer—which gave it its first public performance. The event took place on December 16th, 1921, Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra being the "creators" of the new work.

The opening movement of the concerto is a rollicking *Allegro*, preceded by quite an elaborate introduction. The second movement *Andante* is of almost military character, divided into five difficult and complex variations; the final and third movement, *Allegro ma non troppo* is in a fairly blustering, staccato mood, ending in a brilliant *coda*.

Technically, the present album seemed to us a little on the over-bright and brash side. The piano is right on top of the microphone, which isn't really necessary, as Mitropoulos is a performer of quite unusual power. The Robin Hood Dell Orchestra, made up almost entirely of players from the Philadelphia Orchestra and, therefore, a superlative instrument, suffers at time from confused reproduction.

The concerto was recorded in the Philadelphia Academy of Music, whose acoustics are proverbially fine. Maybe some of the reservations in the above paragraph stem from the fact that after all this music is a composition of the most virtuoso and flamboyant style. An interesting and spectacular album to add to any collection.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Trio No. 7 in E flat, K. 498. Louis Kentner (piano), Reginald Kell (clarinet), Frederick Riddle (viola). 3-12" discs in album (C-DX-998 to C-DX-1000) (also available in automatic sequence C-DX-8147 to C-DX-8149). \$6.

This lovely work of Mozart is seldom heard on the concert platform and few record collections contain a recording of it because it is not listed in the present domestic catalogs. Thus this version is particularly welcome. It has been splendidly played and faithfully reproduced.

It has always been a favorite of ours and we recall a description of it given by Cyril M. Crabtree in a series of articles on chamber music that appeared in *The Gramophone* (London) a number of years ago.

Mr. Crabtree said:

"No one, I think, could deny that there is solid music in this Trio; but the especial value of this work for clarinet, viola, and piano is as a change from the pure thought of the purest chamber music, which is, of course, the best string-ensemble works. There are times when, even the man who has discovered that one of his soul's needs is chamber music wants complete passivity; and this is the music for such times. It is concerned not so much, directly, with truth, as with beauty: spiritual, rather than sensual, beauty. I am inclined to feel that the clarinet has an unrivalled power of expressing such beauty. It has almost the limpidity of the flute, without its insipidity. (Mozart, as many other personal composers, has little use for the flute.) Its greatest strength is liquid, smooth, serene melody. That is the main impression left on one by this work."

OPERA



Tchaikovsky: Eugene Onegin, Op. 24. (Sung in Russian). Soloists, chorus, and orchestra conducted by Mehlik-Pashayev and A. I. Orloff. 17-12" discs in two albums with libretto (automatic sequence). Disc Set No. 755 (recorded in USSR). \$27.20.

This seems to be the moment for complete operas and rumors of complete operas. However, the two bulky volumes of the complete *Eugene Onegin* is anything but a rumor. While Victor and Columbia are trying to decide just how to begin their elaborately publicized campaigns, the Disc Company of New York enters solidly into the picture with this fine set recorded in the Soviet Union.

Onegin is perhaps Russia's most popular opera. The Metropolitan saw fit to produce it once in an Italian translation giving it on March 24, 1919, with Claudia Muzio, Martinelli, De Luca, Flora Perini and Didur in principal roles. It was at that time seen that Tchaikovsky's opera had faults as theater, but the music was praised without reservations.

One presumes that the Soviet's best operatic artists were employed for this present important undertaking. If that is so, the USSR must have a paucity of genuine stars, denying the often asserted fact that art and talent flourish like grass under a spring rain in the Soviet Union.

However, it is not one's desire to create the impression that these artists are not good. They are; but not one is really outstanding. Not one voice has marked individuality or stellar quality. Everyone, nevertheless, sings his or her part with ability and understanding.

There is a good *Lenski* in I. S. Koslovsky, who sings the beautiful aria preceding the duel with thin tone but intense Nordic introspection. E. D. Kruglikova, the set's heroine, *Tatiana*, has a firm, ready voice

which projects the famous *Letter Scene* (the most beautiful passage in the opera) with warmth and understanding and the appropriate Victorian languor. She is no Muzio nor Lotte Lehmann, however.

In the title-role, the baritone, P. M. Norzoff displays a light but well managed tone. A more imposing voice would have been here desirable. Perhaps the best singer of the set is the basso, M. D. Mihailoff, who sings *Prince Gremin's* last act aria with excellently placed tone.

Onegin is an opera of many and varied scenes. There are balls and peasant gatherings, boudoir confidences and duels in the icy dawn of the Russian winter. All these are vividly reflected on these surfaces with solos, dialogues, choruses, waltzes, mazurkas and a brilliant Polonaise.

The actual recording is sane and well-balanced, clear and free from extraneous noise. It is the best recording by far that has come out of the USSR fully worthy of its subject. The complete recording of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* is an important event in the record world.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Suzel, buon di (Cherry Duet) (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Mafalda Favero (soprano) and Tito Schipa (tenor) with members of La Scala Orchestra conducted by Giuseppe Antonicelli. 1-12" disc (V-DB-3067). \$2.50.

This superb recording appeared in the RCA Victor catalog for a few years and then disappeared. Since it has been unavailable numerous calls for it have come to dealers. A recent shipment from abroad contained some copies and so it should now be available from those dealers who specialize in imported discs.

The artistic blending of those voices in this lovely duet makes this a disc that all those interested in operatic recordings should not fail to hear.

Weber: Oberon—Ocean, Thou Mighty Monster (Act II). (Sung in English). Joan Hammond (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Vilem Tausky. 1-12" disc (V-C-3493). \$1.90.

From England we receive this fine recording of the most important aria from Weber's *Oberon* sung in English, the language in which this opera had its premiere. It occurred at Covent Garden, London, in 1826. Miss Hammond does not quite have the dramatic voice required for this aria—listen to Kirsten Flagstad's recording in German for RCA Victor issued in 1939. However, much of Miss Hammond's singing is admirable and she has superb orchestral support. If you would prefer this aria sung in English, perhaps you will choose Miss Hammond's recording. If the language in which it is rendered makes no difference, you will very likely choose the Flagstad version.

CHORAL



Mozart: Requiem (Mass No. 20, K. 626). (Sung in Latin). Pia Tassinari (soprano), Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano), Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor), Italo Tajo (bass), with Chorus and Orchestra of E.I.A.R. conducted by Victor de Sabata. 8-12" discs, with booklet and album (manual sequence only) (Cetra SS-1001 to SS-1008). \$25.72.

Cetra's recording of the Mozart *Requiem* is from every standpoint an unusual accomplishment. Unlike most undertakings of this kind which seem burdened with a self-conscious, academic dryness, this album carries with it the aura of an event, the flavor of something special, the tension of an actual performance.

Performed on December 5th, 1941—to commemorate 150 years after Mozart's death to the day—the *Requiem* was recorded in the basilica of Santa Maria degl'Angeli in Rome. Perhaps some of the atmosphere of this famous church, constructed by Michelangelo out of a part of the 1700-year-old Roman ruins of the baths of Diocletian, was caught in this superb recording.

Four famous soloists, a chorus of 300, and an orchestra of 160 under the electric beat of Victor de Sabata, were enlisted to produce this magnificent accomplishment.

For those to whom Mozart means rococo fligree and exquisitely fastidious musical tracteries, this performance will come as a surprise. It is red-blooded and alive. It is full of style and drama. Those who find Verdi's *Requiem* theatrical and dramatic, will be forced to admit that the present composition comes under the same headings.

The stirring choral masses in the *Kyrie*; the drama of the *Confutatis Maledictis*, the impressively soft, sustained melody of the *Lachrymosa* offer a challenge which is here superbly met.

Victor de Sabata's work comes as a revelation. It unites the best qualities of such conductors as Toscanini and Serafin. It has authority and drive, and the personal deductions of a first-class musical figure. Mr. de Sabata's accomplishment is one of the significant ones in recorded history.

The chorus is admirably balanced. The basses are impressively heavy and the sopranos cope easily with the dizzy contrapuntal vortices which often occur in the upper part of the scale.

The solo quartet is made up of four of Italy's most distinguished singers: Pia Tassinari, soprano; Ebe Stignani, mezzo-soprano; Ferruccio Tagliavini, tenor, and Italo Tajo, bass. The quality is high. Mme. Tassinari's voice is lovely and clear and her Mozart style exemplary. Of the four soloists she has the most to sing.

Good as these soloists are, it is the *Requiem* as a

whole, as conceived by Mozart and interpreted by de Sabata, that ultimately commands one's undivided attention.

The recording is wonderful—especially when one thinks that these vast forces were singing and playing in an ancient basilica that little dreamed it would be the chosen place for such an undertaking. Perhaps never before have huge choral and orchestral forces been so successfully and realistically reproduced.

Whoever obtains this set will have invested in something of real value.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Bach: Cantata No. 4.—Christ Lag in Todesbanden. (Sung in German). RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1096. \$3.75.

Christ Lag in Todesbanden or *Cantata No. 4.* is said to have been written for the Easter service in St. Thomas' Church, Leipzig, in 1724, a little less than a year after Bach was first associated with this historic edifice. It also marked the first time that Bach availed himself of a complete Lutheran hymn, using a text by Martin Luther himself.

The *Cantata* is made up of an opening *sinfonia*, followed by seven verses, which follow the sequence of the hymn. A four-part chorus is indicated for this composition as well as an orchestra of considerable size.

The present set, in a neat 10-inch size album, has the benefit of some illuminating notes by David Hall on the inside cover. On the excellently recorded discs we have the *Cantata* sung by the RCA Victor Chorale with Robert Shaw conducting both it and the Victor Symphony. Mr. Shaw has done an excellent job, for the singing is clear and well-balanced, delicately adjusted to the various moods and dynamics of the music.

The recording and surfaces are above the average of what one hears nowadays. The surfaces are so smooth that one hopes this indicates more consistent use of superior materials in the future.

D.

Lourdes Hymn (trad.). One side, and **Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All** (trad.). Holy Name College Choir (Washington, D. C.), directed by Father Claude Kean, O.F.M. 1-10" disc. (NCS-1072). \$1.25.

These well-known Catholic hymns have been very nicely sung by the Holy Name College Choir, Franciscan House of Studies, Washington, D. C. The reproduction is satisfactory and the record surfaces quite smooth.

Parry: Jerusalem. One side, and **Webber: Now Once Again Our Hearts We Raise.** Royal Choral Society conducted by Malcolm Sargent with organ accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-B-3125). \$1.35.

This disc was issued before World War II and small

quantities of it were imported from time to time until the importation of records was stopped by the conflict. There is a limited call for it, largely because of the Webber selection *Now Once Again Our Hearts We Raise*, which is quite often sung by choirs in this country. Those interested will be glad to know that a few copies were included in a recent shipment from England.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1115. \$2.85.

RCA Victor has answered Columbia magnificently with this release of the ever-popular "Moonlight." Columbia's January release of this work played by Oscar Levant was not hailed very heartily, for it only added another to the long list of recorded "Moonlights," not one of which is considered entirely satisfactory by many persons. We feel that the present set by Horowitz is definitely the best yet, although we have not heard the English set by Moiseivitch. Horowitz takes four well-filled sides to perform this work, the first movement running onto the second side. The first movement is done with great restraint, yet with a lovely singing tone; it is not stiff, nor is it gushy—we thought it just about right. The second movement, occupying the balance of the second record side, is simple and unpretentious, and played without fuss. In the third movement, Horowitz climbs far ahead of most of his competitors on records. The *presto agitato* third movement is difficult music to play, but Horowitz encompasses the difficulties with his accustomed ease and plays it clearly and cleanly with tremendous dynamic contrasts. His control is really amazing. All too often this last movement is smeary and just plain noisy; it is a pleasure to hear Horowitz clarify it without losing any of its dramatic impact. The English set by Solomon is good, especially this last movement, although he is overly deliberate in the first movement. Horowitz seems hard to beat for a well proportioned interpretation throughout.

The reproduction of the piano pleased us greatly—the instrument sounds like a piano, with a fine ring to it. The review copy had defective records which produced huge swishing noises for about an inch on each side—seemed to be the result of heat or faulty pressing. This copy is undoubtedly an exception. In spite of the defective copy, the recording sounded good, and a perfect set should be eminently satisfactory.

There is never room, in our opinion, for more recordings of "the same old stuff" when they are ordinary recordings; but there is always room for a well-performed set such as this of any familiar masterpiece.

S.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1102. \$2.85.

After a number of years without a high-fidelity recording of the *Pathétique*, Vox released one late last summer which we reviewed in October. That set, played by Erno Balogh, was considered rather restrained, although Balogh played it very well technically. We predicted several more to follow (naturally)—and here is the third set. In November Columbia released one by Serkin, now RCA Victor offers Rubinstein. So we have three major artists from which to choose. Serkin, alone, observes the repeat in the first movement before playing the development; this and other spacing puts his set on six sides. Vox and the current Victor set are each four sides. Rubinstein is not as powerful and dramatic as Serkin, nor as restrained as Balogh. Rubinstein has a nicely proportioned reading; but we do not believe his playing is as clean and transparent as Balogh's. Rubinstein has the finest reproduction.

Therefore, the score would seem to be Rubinstein first, because of his reasonable interpretation and especially because of the best reproduction. For those who want the most dramatic reading, Serkin is their man and for those who prefer a cool, clean, clear exposition of the *Pathétique*, Balogh will fill their bill perfectly. For those who don't particularly care how it is played, just so it sounds well, Rubinstein is their man. Now everyone should be happy, and we presume the epidemic of *Pathétiques* is over. The surfaces on our set were reasonably quiet.

S.

Liszt: Valse Oubliée (Forgotten Waltz). One side, and **Schumann: Vogel als Prophet, Op. 82, No. 7 (The Prophet Bird).** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1272). 75c.

These two well-known encore pieces for piano are nicely played by Mr. Rubinstein. However, the copy of this disc that we received for review has very noisy surfaces, which interfered with our enjoyment of the music.

Albeniz: Iberia—Triana. One side, and **Paganini—arr. Liszt: La Campanella.** Cyril Smith (piano). 1-12" disc (C-DX-1214). \$2.

This imported disc will be of especial interest to American collectors of piano recordings for two reasons. In the first place, the English critics think that it is the finest piano reproduction that has as yet been achieved in that country. Secondly, it will introduce to many of us on this side of the Atlantic, the English teacher and pianist, Cyril James Smith. Mr. Smith was born in Middlesbrough in 1909. He went to the Royal College of Music, London, in 1926 where he studied piano with Herbert Fryer. His first public appearance was at a R.C.M. concert in 1929. He has appeared regularly at the Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts since 1931. At present he is professor

of pianoforte at the R.C.M.

Mr. Smith is a pianist of great technical skill as one may easily realize when he listens to the fine performance he gives of the fiendishly difficult *La Campanella*. We do not hesitate to urge all those who are interested in piano recordings to investigate this disc.

VIOLIN



Isaac Stern in Violin Selections from "Humoresque."
Isaac Stern (violin) with orchestra conducted by Franz Waxman, and Oscar Levant (piano). 4-12" discs in album. \$5.

Dvorák—arr. Waxman: *Humoresque*. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov**: *Flight of the Bumble Bee*. (C-71881D).

Wagner—arr. Waxman: *Tristan und Isolde*—Excerpts. (C-71882).

Sarasate: *Zigeunerweisen*. (C-71883D).

Bizet—arr. Waxman: *Carmen Fantasy*. (C-71884D).

If you have seen Warner Bros. picture *Humoresque*, featuring Oscar Levant, you have probably wondered who played the violin for the sound-track for Paul Boray, the young violinist in the movie. It was Isaac Stern, the young virtuoso of this album.

The labels do not so state but we are of the opinion that these discs were dubbed from the sound-track of the film. This is indicated by the abrupt breaks in the music between record sides, and the over-amplified and muddy reproduction that is typical of movie recording that is designed for a huge auditorium rather than an average room. We have never heard any really good recordings that were dubbed from film. Stokowski tried this method with the Philadelphia Orchestra a number of years ago. The idea was for the orchestra to play the work through without stopping and then to dub the recording from the film on the various record sides. After many experiments, Stokowski gave it up as a bad job. One or two of such recordings were made available to the public and they were generally considered very poor.

Perhaps movie fans will be interested in this album but we feel sure that most genuine music lovers will think that it is a pretty bad job of recording.

R.

Schumann—arr. Hullweck: *Traumerei*, Op. 15, No. 7. One side, and **Grieg**—arr. Hartmann: *Album Leaf*, Op. 28, No. 3. Mischa Elman (violin) with piano accompaniments by Leopold Mittman. 1-10" disc (V-10-1271). 75c.

Two tuneful little pieces that most everyone knows, nicely played by Mischa Elman and well-recorded by RCA Victor.

VOCAL



Oratorio Arias. Norman Cordon (bass-baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1094. \$3.85.

Handel: The Messiah—Why do the Nations? One side and **Haydn: The Creation**—Now Heaven in Fullest Glory Shone. (V-11-9430).

Bach: St. Matthew Passion—Give Me Back My Lord. One side, and **Mendelssohn: St. Paul**—O God, Have Mercy Upon Me. (V-11-9431).

Mendelssohn: Elijah—Lord God of Abraham. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Elijah**—It is Enough. (V-11-9432).

RCA has in the past issued albums of oratorio arias for soprano, contralto and tenor, employing Eleanor Steber, Marian Anderson and Richard Crooks for the purpose. This series has now been completed with these great bass arias.

Norman Cordon has a fundamentally fine voice, but his greatest asset is not this instrument but rather his authority and dignity as an artist. These qualities are eminently desirable in a singer of oratorio music. The voice is another matter. Mr. Cordon's tones are often pushed and hollow, and the sound of his singing in florid passages, such as Handel's *Why do the Nations?* and Bach's *Give Me Back My Lord*, is not a thing of beauty. The singer seems to vary his production in a rather aimless manner, sometimes producing tones that are too covered, while at other moments, these same notes are too open. All this would indicate a technique which is not basically sure.

Mr. Cordon's outstanding assets are those which stress deep feeling and reverence. With these he makes considerable effect. For this reason *O God, Have Mercy Upon Me* from Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*, and the same composer's *It is Enough* from *Elijah* contain impressive passages.

An orchestra under the direction of Sylvan Levin contributes solidly to the album's finer moments, and the recording is good and the surfaces unusually smooth.

MAX DE SCHAUENESEE.

Fauré: Twelve Songs. Isabel French (soprano), Olympia di Napoli (soprano), with piano accompaniments by Paul Doguereau. 3-12" discs in album. Technichord Set T-7. \$7.55.

Here are 12 songs by Gabriel Fauré, nine of which are not often heard. This in itself is a feather in the cap of Technichord, who has presented these attractive items on six light, unbreakable, red Vinylite surfaces.

The artists employed for this undertaking are Isabel French and Olympia di Napoli, sopranos, and Paul Doguereau, pianist.

Miss French is heard in the first six songs, while

her pupil and *protégée*, Miss di Napoli, sings the last six. Both artists are highly cultured and musicianly singers. Their style is excellent, almost precious. French diction (especially Miss French's) is exemplary, so is the feeling for musical line. These are precise performances in an exquisite drawing-room style. What is lacking is genuine warmth and a quality that springs from the heart rather than from the brain. However, this intellectual approach is quite compatible with the hot-house atmosphere so knowingly created by Fauré, one of the greatest of all French song writers.

Miss French's voice is clear, chilly and steady and her singing admits of no *rubato* whatsoever. Miss di Napoli's voice is somewhat darker in timbre, but her style is identical with that of her colleague. Mr. Doguereau performs ably, though the balance between voice and piano is often too much in his favor.

Surfaces (barring side one which has both pot-holes and a *swish* in this copy) are excellent, and the recording is clear and vivid. D.

Mendelssohn: Ich wollt', meine Liebe, Op. 63 and Abschiedslied der Zugvögel. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Gruss, Op. 19, No. 5 and Abendlied, Op. 8, No. 9.** (Sung in German.) Hulda Lashanska (soprano) and Kerstin Thorborg (mezzo-soprano) with piano accompaniments by George Schick. 1-12" disc (V-11-9021). \$1.

Mendelssohn: Herbstlied and Sonntagsmorgen, Op. 77, No. 1. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Wasserfahrt and Lied aus Ruy Blas.** (Sung in German.) Hulda Lashanska (soprano) and Kerstin Thorborg (mezzo-soprano) with piano accompaniments by George Schick. 1-12" disc. (V-11-9022). \$1.

Here is some music you are not apt to come across often—light duets for soprano and mezzo-soprano by Mendelssohn. Set to texts by Heine, von Eichendorff, Victor Hugo, Uhland and Klingemann, these duos offer plenty of pretty music and a variety of moods. They are all sung in German and are very typical of their composer and the period wherein he flourished.

Not often have we heard two artists blend so harmoniously, vocally as well as temperamentally, as Hulda Lashanska and Kerstin Thorborg. They seem to see eye-to-eye, and to be in particularly sympathetic *rapproch*.

The appearance of Mme. Lashanska on these discs is of interest, when one considers the fact that this soprano was recording Columbia acoustical records as far back as 1917. It is surprising to find her voice still so fresh and youthful. She always was a rarely sensitive artist and the years have not diminished this quality. Mme. Thorborg's lovely mezzo-soprano also sounds particularly well, and both ladies have been given honest and artistic

reproduction.

Particularly attractive is *Herbstlied* (Autumn Song), and we also found *Wasserfahrt* (Water Journey) and *Lied aus Ruy Blas* (Song from Ruy Blas) very engaging. This, you will find, is a most pleasant little excursion into music that is in all probability not familiar to you. Surfaces are unusually free of distracting noises. D.

Rudolf Friml Melodies. Al Goodman and his Orchestra, with Earl Wrightson (baritone), Mary Martha Briney (soprano), and The Guild Chorus. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-165. \$3.15.

The general public never seems to get enough recordings of Friml melodies. It seems that every other month or two some publisher issues a set of such discs. Here is another; this time the publisher is RCA Victor and the artists are Al Goodman and his Orchestra with two top-flight vocalists.

Guion: Home on the Range. One side, and **Hill: The Last Round-Up.** Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1273). 75c.

Mr. Merrill probably had soap-opera radio listeners in mind when he made these maudlin and neo-dramatic versions of *Home on the Range* and *The Last Round-Up*. This disc may enlarge his royalty checks but it certainly will not add to his stature as an artist.



DICTION

"Prayers and Poems"—Selections. Francis Cardinal Spellman (speaking). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1097. \$3.85.

One need not be a Catholic to appreciate and gain spiritual help from the words of the distinguished prelate Francis Cardinal Spellman as recorded on the discs in this unusual album. Men of good will everywhere may have their faith strengthened by these inspiring poems. Most of the selections in this album have been published either in Cardinal Spellman's recent book "Prayers and Poems" or in various magazines. On these discs they come to life in the recorded voice of the man who conceived them.

As we listened to these records, it brought to mind the fine album entitled "Prayer Time" which contained eight short sermons recorded by the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen. Monsignor Sheen's album was released last summer and since that time has gained a wide hearing among Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It occurred to us that those persons who were interested in "Prayer Time" would also most likely be interested in Cardinal Spellman's album.

The six selections that Cardinal Spellman has chosen for the present album are: *The Risen Soldier*;

Prayer for Our Times; Resurrection; Prayer for Children; Our Sleeping Soldiers; and an abridged version of *No Greater Love*. These were all written during or after the Cardinal's two tours of the battlefronts of World War II.

The royalties from the sale of this album will be turned over to the New York Foundling Hospital, an institution which cares for children without distinction as to race, color or creed.

Our Common Heritage. Great poems of American History recited by Bing Crosby, Brian Donlevy, Walter Huston, Fredric March, Agnes Moorehead, and Pat O'Brien, with original music and sound effects by Victor Young and Lehman Engel, and the Jean Neilson Verse Choir. 8-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-536. \$10.

"Our Common Heritage" is an unusual set of discs. It contains some sixteen poems, historic in character, beginning with Joaquin Miller's *Columbus*, and ending with Vachel Lindsay's *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*. Louis Untermeyer has written an interesting and illuminating booklet that accompanies these records. In addition to Mr. Untermeyer's notes, it contains the text of each poem. We presume that this album is intended primarily for educational purposes because most of the poems are those that every school child is supposed to be familiar with. As a whole they are very satisfactorily recited and the unobtrusive musical backgrounds supplied by Victor Young and Lehman Engel are in the best of taste. Just enough music is supplied to relieve the monotony and not enough to take away from the famous texts.

In addition to the two poems mentioned above, the others are: *The American Flag* (Drake); *Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Hemans); *Barbara Frietchie* (Whittier); *Paul Revere's Ride* (Longfellow); *Warren's Address to the American Soldiers* (Pierpont); *Concord Hymn* (Emerson); *Hail Columbia* (Hopkinson); *America* (Smith); *Sheridan's Ride* (Read); *The Star Spangled Banner* (Key); *Old Ironsides* (Holmes); *Nancy Hanks* (Benét); *Lincoln, the Man of the People* (Markham); and *O Captain! My Captain!* (Whitman).

CHILDREN



Uncle Remus Stories. Sterling Holloway (speaking). 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-521. \$3.

Three of Joel Chandler Harris' inimitable stories of Uncle Remus are told with just the proper twang by Sterling Holloway in this delightful album for children. It is a great joy to find stories for young folks that abound in simple kindly humor rather than hideous adventures in the stratosphere based on jet-propulsion and atomic energy.

The stories that are so nicely told in this album are: *The Wonderful Tar Baby*; *Br'er Rabbit is a Fisherman*; and *Br'er Rabbit Raises a Dust*.

Beethoven for Young People. Richard Janaver (narrator); music directed by Jascha Zayde. 3-10" discs in album. Horizon Set WM-1. \$5.

Various methods have been tried to interest young people in the music of the masters. The present album contains one that is very skilfully accomplished. Beethoven's famous *Septet in E flat major*, Op. 20 has been chosen and artists of high calibre have been secured to give a most excellent performance. A running commentary by Richard Janaver, which by the way is quite unobtrusive, adds to the interest of this recording rather than detracts from it. A poor or uninteresting narrator could have spoiled the whole thing and the children would have been shunted away from this performance rather than attracted to it. The value of this method is not the method itself, it is the superb way in which it is carried out. We mention this particularly because imitators will fail if they do not accomplish an almost perfect production—a suitable and interesting musical selection, accomplished artists, and above all, a competent narrator.

For those who would like to interest their children in the better music, we do not hesitate to suggest that they investigate this really worth while album. R.

The Lady in Blue. June Winters, with orchestra and chorus conducted by Al Rickey. 2-10" discs in album. Mayfair (K-104 and K-105). \$2.75

Here is a pair of unbreakable Vinylite discs in an attractive album for little tots. They contain over a dozen songs such as *London Bridge is Falling Down*; *Little Jack Horner*; *Mary Had a Little Lamb*; and *Farmer in the Dell*. They have been nicely sung and splendidly recorded. The children can't break them and they may be easily and safely mailed as a gift to your favorite nephew or niece.

Genie, The Magic Record. Peter Lind Hayes with James Carroll and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc in folder (Decca C. V. 102). \$2.

Here is a record that the little tots will think is great fun, and one that they may be trusted to play for themselves because it is unbreakable. Genie takes the kiddies to the circus and they hear some of the animals and they play games on the way and all sorts of things happen. A very ingenious disc and one that has been well-recorded.

Tales of Uncle Remus (from "Song of the South").

Johnny Mercer, The Pied Pipers, James Baskett and original cast with Billy May and his orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Capitol Set CC-40. \$3.

Hollywood versions of Uncle Remus stories from the famous Walt Disney picture "Song of the South." The kiddies will probably enjoy them, although if Joel Chandler Harris should come back to life, we doubt if he would recognize them. Tuneful melodies from the movie add to the attractiveness of this recording.

MISCELLANEOUS



Old Music Box Melodies—First Edition. 3-10" discs in album. Bornand Set RB-1. \$5.

Old Music Box Melodies—Religious. 3-10" discs in album. Bornand Set RB-2. \$5.

Old Music Box Melodies—Old Favorites. 3-10" discs in album. Bornand Set RB-3. \$5.

For those of us who can remember before the phonograph and the radio came into general use, these recordings of fine old music boxes from the A. V. Bornand collection have a nostalgic touch. As we listened to these records, we recalled the many times that we peeked through the parlor curtains at our mother serving tea and cookies to her female friends on her afternoons-at-home, while the Swiss music box supplied the delicate, and to them, entrancing music. We don't know how the present generation will take to these records but perhaps there are enough old duffers like ourselves who will find them sufficiently interesting to warrant their commercial success. We also understand that they sound very well over amplifying systems and that they have been used by numerous churches with very pleasing results.

Each album contains six selections. RB-1 contains among others: *Silent Night*; *Adeste Fideles* and Gounod's *Ave Maria*. RB-2 includes *Abide With Me*; *Nearer My God to Thee*; *Lead Kindly Light* and others. In RB-3 will be found *Home Sweet Home*; *The Mocking Bird*; *Silver Threads Among the Gold* and similar ballads.

Harmonica Classics. John Sebastian (harmonica) with accompaniments by Russ Case and his Orchestra, Albert Malver (piano), and Norris Shawker (drums). 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-166. \$3.15.

John Sebastian, a concert artist who has appeared with the Philadelphia and NBC Symphony Orchestras, and in some of the most famous supper clubs of the country, makes his debut on RCA Victor records this month. For those who are interested in harmonica playing, the present album is a must. Mr. Sebastian's choice of selections is nicely varied and his instrument has been most faithfully reproduced on these discs.

The selections contained in this album are: *Mala-guena*; *Inca Dance*; *Aria* (Bach); *Ritual Fire Dance*; *Stompe a la Turca*; *The Maiden with the Flaxen Hair*; and *Moroccan Serenade*.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Record Book (Complete Edition. Reprint). By David Hall. xvii+1063 pp. The Citadel Press (New York). Price \$2.98.

With Strings Attached: Reminiscences and Reflections. By Joseph Szigeti. Illustrated. 341+xvii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Mastercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofonken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Teichmold, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 3

MAY 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom. xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

We'll warrant that Jack Hallstrom would have given most anything to have had a copy of his book on hand when he went into the music business some fifteen or so years ago. He had had no formal musical training and by his own confession knew little about music in general or in particular. It wasn't long before Jack was coming in contact with the great musicians of our time in his work in promoting the sale of Victor records. He soon found out that these musical big-wigs were discussing music that he had never heard of in terms that meant little or nothing to him. It was all very appalling. He felt that he must attempt in some way to attain an appreciation of highbrow music and learn some of its nomenclature. He went at it the hard way with musical dictionaries and biographies, and by attending concerts and records and records and records. He went at it intently and he found it a tremendous nerve-racking task. AND then one day he realized that he was missing the forest—he couldn't see it for the trees. He sat back in a comfortable chair and let the music come to him from his phonograph. He relaxed and listened; and happy, happy day, music, the best of it, came to him easily and pleasantly, and what had been a tedious task became real pleasure. However, the nomenclature was not so easy to come by. The dictionaries gave long technical definitions that were almost impossible for the layman to grasp, and to gain a nodding acquaintance with the great composers was also difficult, because the biographies dwelt at length on the intimate details of their lives and contained much extraneous matter that was not at all necessary

for an appreciation of their music.

AND so Jack sat down and wrote a book in his inimitable style—so breezy that you have to hold on to your hat while you're reading it. He defines musical terms in language that anyone can understand. Here's one: "The meaning of 'opus,' literally, is 'work.' The plural, by the way, is opera—the significance being, I guess, that when you go to the opera you get the works." His description of a concerto, using the Empire State Building as a comparison, is a gem. His thumb-nail sketches of the great composers may be a bit unorthodox but we doubt if anyone will ever forget the salient points about them that he brings out so forcibly.

He stresses again and again that there is nothing difficult in appreciating fine music. He urges one to sit back and relax and enjoy it, and he gives many hints of just how to do it. Of course, he has not forgotten that his principal business is to sell Victor records, and so he slips in at the end of his book a short list of some fifty pages of Victor recordings that he considers helpful in gaining a fair appreciation of the world's really great music. We suppose that other record manufacturers do have an item or two that might be of value, but, for some reason, Jack fails to mention them in his swell "opus." We put opus in quotes, because if it means "work," as Jack says, it belongs in quotes, for we do not believe that writing this book was nearly as much work as it was real fun.

* * *

Music Comes to America (Revised Edition).

By David Ewen. 295 pp. Allen, Towne and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

Mr. Ewen's *Music Comes to America* was originally published several years ago and was well received by both the critics and the public. It has been out-of-print for some time. The

present edition has been completely revised and brought up-to-date with much new material.

Music Comes to America is really a series of essays which are arranged in two groups under the headings "Yesterday" and "Today." Under the former you will find such titles as "When America Was Musically Young," "America's Musical Pioneers" and "Opera in America." Under the latter heading are "Music and the First World War," "New Horizons for Music Education" and "Recognition for American Music."

Mr. Ewen, in his usual interesting and lively manner, first sketches conditions in the musical world before the turn of the century, outlining the work of the pioneers such as Theodore Thomas and the Damrosches, giving them full credit for the great work that they did in what was pretty much a musical wilderness. With enthusiasm and proper pride, Mr. Ewen tells the story of the progress music has made in America since 1900, especially the great strides that have been made since World War I. Music lovers will surely find this book interesting and quite exciting. A comprehensive index and a bibliography make *Music Comes to America* valuable as a book of reference.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 ("Reformation"). Seven sides, and **Mozart: La Clemenza di Tito, K.621** ("Titus")—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1104. \$4.85.

Here is an album we were in need of for a very

long time—an up-to-date recording by a great conductor and a first-class orchestra of a seldom-played and arresting symphony. For Mendelssohn's *Reformation Symphony* with its martial rhythms, trumpet calls and soaring Dresden Amens is just that.

Up to now we have had to rely on Columbia's recording of this beautiful score, performed by Howard Barlow and the CBS Orchestra (C-391). This was never too happy a performance, for it lacked the thrust and energy so essential to this music, as well as the spaciousness of treatment which you will find in Sir Thomas Beecham's magistral performance.

Mendelssohn conceived the music of the symphony when he was 21 years old and had just returned from a long summer tour of England and Scotland, his imagination fired by the historical glamor and pageantry of those countries. The symphony was actually completed by Mendelssohn, in Berlin, during April of 1830. As originally planned, it had been composed for the 300th anniversary of the framing (in 1530) of the Augsburg Confession or Lutheran Church Creed. The formal title of the work was *Symphony for the Festival of the Reformation of the Church*. Large scale observances of this commemoration were, however, made impossible by the political disturbances that took place that year.

For some reason this fine and straightforward work has never enjoyed the popularity of Mendelssohn's *Scotch* and *Italian* Symphonies. Performances of the *Reformation* are consequently infrequent. With this knowledge in mind, it is especially fortunate for those of us who find much to admire in this music, to have at our command such a grandiose and noble exposition of Mendelssohn's symphony.

Sir Thomas is an ideal Mendelssohn conductor, and the London Philharmonic obeys his every intention and nuance. Recording is not the very best, by any means, but it is good enough and mellow in sound. The surfaces Victor has bestowed upon its new recording are entirely satisfactory.

On the last record-side, Sir Thomas has added another of his delightful Mozart readings—this time, the sprightly and seldom heard Overture to *La Clemenza di Tito*.
MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E Flat Op. 55 ("Eroica"). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 7-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-19. \$15.

Has anything on records been more vigorously contested than the merits of the various recordings of the *Eroica*? The camps are divided on every angle. Toscanini's taut reading recorded from an actual performance has mechanical difficulties. Walter's eloquent reading fills the bill for many, but others find it too expansive, and the reproduction too spacious and "bass-booming." The Weingartner and Koussevitzky sets are poor recording and questionable reading respectively for most folks.

Our preference has been for the eloquent Walter set. And that made it difficult for us when this new one by Sabata came along. If the sky were suddenly to become pink instead of blue, it may be no less beautiful, although the change would probably be annoying—so with Sabata. His reading is very different from Walter's; yet it is logical, reasonable, and obviously the product of a conductor of great stature. For Sabata ranks as one of the outstanding conductors of our day, and is generally considered the best in Italy now. His molding of phrases, balance of orchestral tone, and sense of climax is masterly. His reading is not as impassioned as Walter's; but his *Eroica* contains drama and emotion under firm control. It is well worth your time to hear this performance.

Recorded in the Assembly Hall, Walthamstow, this recording contains more echo than the majority of Decca frr's which are made in London's Kingsway Hall. The fidelity remains excellent. These Deccas are not standard size as explained previously in THE NEW RECORDS. S.

Strauss, R.: Don Juan, Op. 20. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sidney Beer. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-15. \$5.

Franck: Le Chasseur Maudit. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Franz André. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-20. \$5.

A pair of interesting albums from the English Decca series of frr recordings. The Franck item is new to domestic catalogs, although it has appeared a couple of times in European listings. The work is seldom heard on concert programs, although it is certainly not uninteresting. *Le Chasseur maudit* (The Accursed Huntsman) is descriptive music with no stretch of the imagination required to visualize the rider galloping along. *Grove's Dictionary* gives a terse paragraph to this work, which fills the bill nicely:

"*Le Chasseur maudit*, despite the use of somewhat conventional means of expressing terror, is not unsuccessful. But, like an opera with a poor libretto, it suffers from its *jeune* programme. Does any hearer feel the slightest concern in the fate of the wicked Count who goes a-hunting when he ought to be at church? Of far greater interest is the picture the work gives of Franck himself, in an 'unbuttoned' mood that was all too rare with him."

This set, which has been available for several weeks, has enjoyed a lively sale and created some interest for those seeking fresh material for their collections. It is well played and strikingly reproduced.

Don Juan is gloriously recorded. The sound of the full orchestra is captured with breadth, balance, and remarkable timbre. Fortunately too, the performance does not detract from the thrill which the reproduction affords. That may be a left-handed compliment; however, it is admittedly not as hair raising a *tour de force* as for example, the Fritz Reiner read-

ing. Sidney Beer gives a sound reading that is beyond cavil for musicianship, with no manufactured thrills. England's National Symphony plays well and the whole work provides us with the best *Don Juan* on discs. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-21. \$13.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-9. \$7.

Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty—Excerpts from the Ballet Suite. B.B.C. Theatre Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-18. \$5.

A trio of familiar Tchaikovsky orchestral fare. The most sensational moment of the twenty-two sides listed above occurred, for us, in the introduction to the Waltz of the Flowers in the *Nutcracker Suite*, where the realistic sound of the harp in those lovely long solo passages is unbelievably life-like. All of the oft-waxed *Nutcracker* is beautifully reproduced, and Robinson provides a truly interesting account of the score. He has a few individual touches, not capricious; and he brings out much of the magic of the score. His competence is again in evidence in *The Sleeping Beauty* excerpts with the BBC Theatre Orchestra. Both these sets offer highly popular music in capital reproductions.

Our enthusiasm for the *Pathétique* is rather limited, for we must confess to an unswerving devotion to Furtwangler's reading. Furtwangler has never been equalled, let alone surpassed, in his reading of this score. Rodzinski's recent Columbia set was very fair indeed, and all other versions are not worth the space to evaluate them. Albert Coates seems to have an international reputation for his manner of interpreting the *Pathétique* (and his mannerisms). We found it of various qualities, embracing excellent, good, amusing, amazing, deliberate, and individual. But it all adds up to something that missed fire for us. Furtwangler is still unapproachable in this score (VM-553, now being repressed by RCA; also available on imported HMV discs). The reproduction of the Coates set is typical English Decca frr, which is to say excellent. S.

Waldteufel: The Skaters Waltz, Op. 183. One side, and **Arkansas Traveler** (arr. Guion and Schmid) and **Sousa: Semper Fidelis.** Carnegie Pops Orchestra conducted by David Broekman. 1-12" disc (C-71957D). \$1.

Here are some lively tunes that most anyone may enjoy—especially those folks who like music with a little "up and go" about it. It has been played with gay spirit and has been well recorded.

Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite. Five sides, and **Kabalevsky: Fete Populaire.** Santa Monica Civic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 3-12" discs in album. Asch Set No. 800. \$5.35.

The first recordings of two contemporary Soviet composers' works played by a new orchestra usher Asch into the field of classics. Our enthusiasm for *Masquerade* cannot match our opinion of *Gayne*, for the music has not quite the freshness and impact of *Gayne* (Col. M-664, reviewed in March 1947). It seems to be a diluted *Gayne*, which is of course impossible, as *Gayne* was composed about three years after *Masquerade*. There is quite a similarity between the two works, and it must be to Khachaturian's credit that *Gayne*, the later work, is superior. If you have heard, or acquired, the recent *Gayne* recording, you may find this set of *Masquerade* a bit tame; although we imagine many will derive a lot of enjoyment from it.

Rachmilovich knows his way around in this score and his Santa Monica Orchestra is a competent group. The next issues of this outfit will include the First and Second Symphonies of Tchaikovsky. We earnestly hope that they will be accorded finer reproduction and acoustical background than *Masquerade* received. Asch must soon realize that today's standards absolutely demand better surfaces than they offer.

Masquerade Suite is in five sections: Valse, Nocturne, Mazurka, Romance, Galop. It was composed in 1939, but did not receive its first performance until 1944.

The *Fete Populaire* is from Kabalevsky's opera *Colas Breugnot*, whose overture is enjoying a wide popularity at present. S.

Music of Morton Gould. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Morton Gould. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-668. \$5.

C-12515D and C-12516D. *Cowboy Rhapsody.* Three sides, and *American Salute.*

C-12517D. *Go Down, Moses* (arr. for string choir). One side, and *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* (arr. for string choir).

C-12518D. *New China March.* One side, and *Red Cavalry March.*

The title of this album is "Music of Morton Gould." It might very appropriately be changed to "Music for Summer Concerts by Morton Gould." All of the pieces contain melodies that the folks, who gather around the band stands in the parks on summer evenings, know and can whistle. *Cowboy Rhapsody* has "Home on the Range," *American Salute* has "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," and *Red Cavalry March* has "Song of the Plains." The Negro spirituals that have been arranged for string choir would make good encore pieces—the folks could enjoy these while they were eating their

ice cream cones.

All of this stuff might be pleasant enough to listen to casually as one sits on a park bench looking up at the stars with his best girl by his side, but to listen to an album full of it in one's living-room would be a bit too much for us. After two or three sides it begins to pall.

The reproduction has been satisfactorily accomplished and the record surfaces are quiet.

Borodin: On the Steppes of Central Asia. The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 1-12" disc (C-71956D). \$1.

On the Steppes of Central Asia is one of Borodin's most important orchestral works, and a modern recording of it has been needed for some time. This fascinating music was intended as a kind of musical accompaniment to one of a series of historical *tableaux vivants* which formed part of the celebrations of the silver jubilee of the Czar Alexander II, in 1880. The work begins quietly, picturing the ominous silence of the sandy steppes of Central Asia. A Russian song is heard, followed by one more Oriental in character. A caravan, escorted by Russian troops, crosses the immense desert, and the tramp of the horses and camels, mingled with the songs of the Russians and Asiatics, is suggested in a colorful, effective motley. The music comes to a quiet ending, as if the caravan had disappeared in the distance.

The skilful instrumental coloring, the occasional barbaric outbursts of the entire orchestra, and the softer passages, evoking the silence of the desert, make this a remarkable and highly enjoyable work. It is played skilfully by the Philharmonia Orchestra under the direction of Constant Lambert and has been well recorded.

Delius—arr. Beecham: The Walk to the Paradise Gardens. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 1-12" disc (V-11-9493). \$1.

About a year ago Barbirolli recorded this selection with the Hallé Orchestra and a few copies of the imported recording reached America last summer. They were immediately disposed of to discerning collectors, for it was an outstanding recording. While the present version may not be quite as fine, it is well-played and faithfully recorded, and but a little more than half the price of the imported disc.

As most persons know, *The Walk to the Paradise Gardens* is the orchestral interlude between scenes five and six in Delius' musical lyric drama "A Village Romeo and Juliet." The young lovers are returning from the Fair, where gossips have attached scandal to their names, and they are proceeding to Paradise Gardens, an inn located on a river bank. They board a barge and sail down the river to their deaths which they accomplish by deliberately scuttling the boat. Their coming doom is portrayed in the interlude,

and the touching pathos, which always rings absolutely true, lends a charm that is irresistible.

Handel—arr. Beecham: **The Great Elopement**. The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1093. \$3.85.

(This annotation is reprinted from the March 1947 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

When this set of discs was issued in England, H.M.V. supplied the following note:

"The Great Elopement is a ballet of which Sir Thomas Beecham has written the story and scenario. It consists of seventeen pieces, and the music is founded upon various numbers taken mostly from the operas of Handel, all of them re-scored for modern orchestra.

"The scene of the ballet is the city of Bath, at that time (the second half of the eighteenth century) one of the most fashionable pleasure resorts of Europe. The celebrated Beau Nash was the Master of Ceremonies, and the Director of Music was Thomas Linley, one of the most popular composers of the day.

"His daughter, Elizabeth, a beautiful girl and an accomplished singer, is sought in marriage by a local squire whose suit is unwelcome to her. There appears upon the scene a brilliant young stranger, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, as yet unknown to fame, but the future author of *The School for Scandal* and *The Rivals*. The two young people fall in love, to the chagrin of Linley as well as the squire, and, with the assistance of the sympathetic Beau Nash, elope to London."

Sir Thomas has selected music that seems to fit the sentimental and amusing plot perfectly. It is lovely and tuneful, and the six sides of these discs are finished long before one gets enough of these fascinating melodies. The urge is to replace them on the phonograph and hear them again. We suspect that persons who secure this album will play it many, many times before they get tired of it. Most of the music will be new to them and as presented by Sir Thomas, with no stint of loving care and always with impeccable taste, it is a most delightful musical experience.

As the reproduction is superb, we can heartily recommend this album. R.

Selections from "Carnegie Hall." D'Artega and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-490. \$2.75.

D'Artega, who plays the part of Tchaikovsky in the United Artists' picture "Carnegie Hall," with aid of Tony Russo (vocalist), Milton Kaye (pianist), Jacques Margolies (violinist) and his orchestra, presents the principal musical selections that are featured in that spectacular film. True music lovers will not care for the atrocious liberties that have been taken

with Tchaikovsky's concertos and symphony, but those who have seen the picture may think this music is pretty smart and will buy this album. The success of this recording will depend upon how many persons see the film and like its music.

A Musical Travelogue. H. Leopold Spitalny and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-493. \$2.75.

H. Leopold Spitalny takes us on a trip through the old world, selecting appropriate pieces from the various countries. From Spain he selected *Para mia*; from Russia *Meadowlands*; from France *Frère Jacques* and *Alouette*; from Roumania *Hora Staccato*; from England *Pomp and Circumstance*; from Norway *Norwegian Dance No. 2*; from Austria *Vienna, City of My Dreams*; and from Italy *Torna a Surriento*. All have been played with taste and the recording and surfaces of the records are satisfactory. At its modest price, this album is quite attractive.

Waltzes. Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians with vocals by Jimmy Brown and Tony Craig. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-509. \$3.75.

Guy Lombardo is known for the simple smooth manner of his band, and in recording these popular waltzes he has maintained his reputation for "the sweetest music this side of heaven." The present album contains some very lovely dinner music. The selections are: *The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi*; *Carolina Moon*; *The Merry Widow*; *Russian Lullaby*; *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*; *Charmaine*; *Shadow Waltz* and *Beautiful Love*.

Music by Candlelight. Hollywood Studio Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-46. \$3.15.

An album of very pleasing dinner music nicely played and satisfactorily recorded. The selections are: *None but the Lonely Heart*; *Come Back to Sorrento*; *Valse Triste*; *Kashmiri Song*; *In a Persian Market*; *Santa Lucia*; *Londonderry Air*; and *Caprice Viennois*.

CONCERTO



Delius: Violin Concerto. Albert Sammons (violin) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-672. \$4.

(This annotation is reprinted from the September, 1946, issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

No music lover is happier than the one to whom Delius' music has been revealed. The revelation can easily come from one of the shorter orchestral works or from the matchless *Appalachia*. The present work is for those whose affection for Delius has been established. Of the four concertos which Delius wrote, the *Violin Concerto* is acknowledged to be the finest. It is

in one continuous movement, although one can ascertain that it is in four sections. These four sections are contrasting to a certain degree; but the idea of the work as a whole is the important thing, for Delius was little concerned with contrasts as we usually consider them in the movements of a symphony or concerto, i. e., an allegro first movement, slow second movement, scherzo third movement, rondo fourth movement, etc. In this concerto the work progresses from the initial idea, and grows and expands in a most logical evolution, with contrasts provided most naturally, and not according to formula. Much of the work is subtle in characteristic Delius manner; but there is enough "beef" here and there to balance it. Surely Delius owes little to other composers for his inimitable style, particularly in his later works. Nature was a great inspiration for him, and his music is hued with refined impressions his temperament absorbed from nature. Some say his music is pictorial, and to an extent much of it is. To us it is always lovely and capable of great enjoyment.

This is the first recording of the *Violin Concerto*, indeed we believe it is the first recording of any Delius concerto. The performance is entirely sympathetic to the music, and does not strive to be virtuoso for virtuosity's sake. The orchestra weaves along with the violin to complete a gorgeous tapestry, and the reproduction is of continental standard. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schubert: Quartet in E flat, Op. 125, No. 1. Guilet String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AE. \$6.85.

Concert Hall Society adds another excellent recording to its growing list of fine items that are not to be found in the present domestic record catalogs.

The lovely Schubert *Quartet in E flat, Op. 125, No. 1* was selected, and the Guilet String Quartet was chosen for the performance. Both were indeed happy choices. The quartet with its charming melodies is truly Schubertian and rates a recording—it is a worthy addition to the repertory of recorded chamber music. In fact, it is just the sort of work that may very easily attract many music lovers who feel that chamber music is "over their heads." Such a recording may make many converts, and bring them into that rather select group who appreciate and enjoy chamber music.

The Guilet String Quartet was founded in 1940 by Daniel Guilet, the former concert master of the Opera Comique in Paris. In addition to Mr. Guilet, the quartet is composed of Frank Brieff (viola) and Lucien Laporte (violin), both of the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, and the distinguished violinist, Jac Gorodtsky. After this group's debut at Town Hall, Virgil Thomson, writing in the *Herald Tribune*, said: "... one of the great string quartets of our century. The way they play is the way the great quartets have always played. No other

quartet has either the homogeneity of tone or brightness of color the Guilets have. The Guilets have everything!"

The present recording has been successfully accomplished. The discs are made of non-breakable Vinylite and are housed in a most attractive album. R.

Mozart: Quartet No. 2 in E flat for piano and strings K. 493. George Szell (piano) with members of the Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-669. \$4.

A new recording of this piano quartet is in order, and we welcome especially such a fine performance and recording. The well known conductor George Szell turns out to be also a finished pianist. Josef Roismann (violin), Boris Kroyt (viola), and Mischa Schneider ('cello), all of the Budapest Quartet join Szell in a well integrated rendition of this sparkling quartet. Columbia has done well by them mechanically.

Mozart wrote two piano quartets, the other being in G minor (K. 478), which has not been adequately recorded. The previous recording of the present second quartet was by Hortense Monath and the Pasquier Trio (VM-438). It was not as successful as Szell and the Budapesters, either as to the rapport of the players or the fidelity of the reproduction.

While neither piano quartet is played very often these days, the first is the more frequently performed. However, the second is a more interesting work; and it is difficult to perform. The piano part is as demanding as the piano part of a concerto, yet the string parts are not accompaniments for the piano—they play the usual roles of chamber music parts by carrying rather equally the thematic material. The *Second Piano Quartet* is an altogether delightful work, which receives a distinguished rendition on these records. S.

Brahms: Sonata in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1. William Primrose (viola) and William Kapell (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1106. \$3.85.

The review copy of this item was received too late to be included in this issue. A review of it will be found in our June number.

VIOLIN



Schubert—trans. Wilhelmj: *Ave Maria*. One side, and Debussy—trans. Roques: *La plus que lente—Valse*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-12" disc (V-11-9571). \$1.

Chopin—trans. Auer: *Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72*. One side, and Sarasate: *Romanza Andaluza*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-12" disc (V-11-9573). \$1.

This pair of discs contains a fine Heifetz recital in

miniature. The extremely brilliant and difficult Sarasate *Romanza Andaluza* might well open the concert and it might close appropriately with the soulful Schubert *Ave Maria*. All have been superbly played by Mr. Heifetz, and splendidly recorded by RCA Victor.

Sarasate: Malaguena, Op. 21, No. 1. One side, and **Sarasate: Habanera, Op. 21, No. 2.** Ricardo Od-noposoff (violin) with piano accompaniments by Gregory Ashman. 1-12" disc (V-11-9495). \$1.

Two Spanish dances played with skill and excellent taste by the brilliant young violinist Ricardo Od-noposoff, and superbly recorded by RCA Victor. For those who like brilliant violin playing, the present disc will provide much enjoyment.

OPERA



A Night at Carnegie Hall. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-676. \$4.

Delibes: Lakmé—Bell Song (Act II). (Sung in French). Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. (C-71973D).

Bizet: Carmen—Seguidilla and Duet (Act I). (Sung in French). Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Raoul Jobin (tenor) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by George Sebastian. One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Samson and Delilah**—Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix (Act II). (Sung in French). Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. (C-71974D).

Verdi: Simon Boccanegra—Il lacerato spirito (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (bass) with the Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—Serenata: Deh, vieni alla finestra (Act II). Ezio Pinza (bass) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—Finch' han dal vino (Act I). Ezio Pinza (bass) with piano accompaniment by Rosa Linda. (Both sung in Italian). (C-71975D).

An album bearing the title *A Night at Carnegie Hall*, with a subtitle—Music from Boris Morros' production "Carnegie Hall," contains some things to be grateful for, despite the aura of Hollywood within which the album is presented.

Most of these assets are supplied by Ezio Pinza. Mr. Pinza here sings the famous aria, *Il lacerato spirito* from *Simon Boccanegra*, a number that usually adorns his recital programs. The basso had never recorded this electrically, his only previous recording of this aria being for Italian HMV, an acoustic of

the early 1920s. Those who heard the Metropolitan production of *Simon Boccanegra* on January 28, 1932, will remember Mr. Pinza's singing of *Il lacerato spirito*, as one of the opera's salient moments. Incidentally, this was the first American production of Verdi's old opera! This celebrated aria is often on the programs of young and inspiring bassos, and it is safe to say that in Mr. Pinza's singing they will find the perfect model, stylistically, and vocally, for Verdi's music.

Mr. Pinza has also sung two excerpts from *Don Giovanni*—the Serenade and the Finch' han dal vino, both of which he made in the early electric days for Victor. We have never cared too much for the great basso's singing of these two excerpts in performances of the opera itself, and that attitude is not altered by these discs. The Finch' han dal vino lacks elegance and is vociferously attacked, while the Serenade is sung in a tightly held half-voice.

Risë Stevens contributes the album's other novelty, which is her singing of *Mon Coeur s'Ouvre a ta Voix* from Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Delila*. Miss Stevens has temperament, but her voice is not altogether steady. Also her French diction is open to question—her final pronunciation of "Samson!" sounds as though she were evoking the composer of the opera rather than the name of the strong man of Gaza.

The rest of this album is made up of things which Columbia has already issued separately and which have been reviewed in these columns when they first appeared. They are Lily Pons' account of the Bell Song from *Lakmé* and Miss Stevens singing of the Seguidilla from *Carmen* assisted by Raoul Jobin. A nice collection of operatic excerpts is what this album boils down to, especially distinguished by Mr. Pinza's singing of the *Simon Boccanegra* aria. Recording is what one can expect today; surfaces vary from noisy to good. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Italian Operatic Arias. Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. (Sung in Italian). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-675. \$4.

Verdi: Aida—Ritorna vincitor (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Ave Maria (Act IV). (C-71958D).

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Or, sai chi l'onore (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Tosca**—Vissi d'arte (Act II). (C-71959D).

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Suicidio! (Act IV). One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana**—Voi lo sapete. (C-71960D).

Time was when the Wagnerian sopranos were not the single-tracked specialists they are today. Johanna Gadski could turn with no embarrassment from her Isolde and Bruennhildes to such roles as Aida, Leonora, Santuzza and Valentine in *Les Huguenots*. Olive Fremstad, beside her Nordic heroines, had

Carmen, Tosca, Salome and other fiery roles in her repertoire. She even appeared as Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffman*. As late as 1926, Mme. Nanny Larsen-Todsen, that most Wagnerian of singers, was appearing at the Metropolitan in *Gioconda*, *La Juive* and *Fidelio*.

Helen Traubel, the Metropolitan's present Wagnerian soprano, appears only in the Bayreuth's master's operas. Therefore, the appearance of the present album by the distinguished soprano comes as a surprise. Maybe Mme. Traubel was anxious to demonstrate her adaptability to Italian roles, at least on records; maybe Columbia felt, that with Mme. Milanov gobbled up by RCA Victor, there was no one else around whom they cared to entrust with this job.

Whatever the reason, the results are here in the grooves of these records. The absence of an authority born of countless stage appearances in these roles is often apparent in this album. Three of the arias—those from *Gioconda*, *Don Giovanni* and *Otello*—are pitched down a half tone.

Most successful record in the album is Mme. Traubel's full-bodied singing of *Vissi d'arte* from Puccini's *Tosca*. This is a sonorous, vocally homogeneous performance. In *Or sai chi l'Onore* from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Mme. Traubel's voice sounds labored, bulky and frequently unsteady. *Voi lo sapete* from *Cavalleria* needs far more Latin treatment (see Muzio, Boninsegna and Arangi-Lombardi). There is little of the Mediterranean in Mme. Traubel's art. *Ritorna Vincitor* has some exquisitely molded phrases, but the opening measures lack conviction, as the singer stresses her consonants in the approved Teutonic fashion. The arias from *Gioconda* and *Otello*, particularly the former, have grandiose moments.

When all is said and done, Mme. Traubel is a first-class vocalist, the possessor of a superbly opulent voice—facts that are apparent no matter what the shortcomings. To one listener this album was more a matter of curiosity, an interesting experiment, rather than an achievement which rests securely on authority and artistic conviction.

Charles O'Connell and an orchestra give the singer good support, and the big, fruity tones have been very honestly recorded. Surfaces in this review copy were disturbingly rough.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Offenbach: Tales of Hoffmann—Barcarolle (Act III). One side, and **Offenbach: Tales of Hoffmann**—Romance of Antonia (Act IV). (Sung in French). Jarmila Novotna (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9263). \$1.

Jarmila Novotna sings these arias from Offenbach's best known opera with taste and a fine regard for the text. Perhaps you will not wish another recording of "Barcarolle," but if you do, you'll find this one highly rewarding. Reproduction—excellent.

Wagner: Das Rheingold—Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge (Scene 4). One side, and **Wagner: Siegfried**—Auf wolkigen Höhn (Act I, Scene 2). (Sung in German). Hans Hermann Nissen (bass-baritone) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-10" disc (V-DA-4460). \$1.85.

For those who are making up recordings of these music dramas from separate discs, this little record will supply two parts that are not available domestically. The selection from *Das Rheingold* contains Wotan's part only. Herr Nissen is an able Wagnerian singer and he receives splendid support from the Berlin State Opera Orchestra.

CHORAL



Seasonal Hymns, Carols, and Chorales. St. Luke's Choristers, with orchestra or organ accompaniment, conducted by Wm. Ripley Dorr. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-45. \$3.15.

The St. Luke's Choristers, who have two successful albums to their credit, present a third one this month, which we are sorry to say does not quite match up to the former ones. For the most part the selections in the present album are quite satisfactorily sung but one or two of them suffer from a lack of precision, which is the charm of a choir of this kind. This rather ragged singing is particularly noticeable in the Eastern hymn, *Jesus Christ is Risen Today*.

The idea of this album is to supply hymns appropriate for various seasons of the Christian year. We therefore find selections for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter, and Thanksgiving. Added to these is the very beautiful Communion hymn, *Break Thou the Bread of Life*, which is very successfully accomplished.

The St. Luke's Choristers have given hundreds of concerts and have appeared in seventy-five motion pictures. On Sundays they sing at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Long Beach, California.

Siegmeister: American Legends. American Ballad Singers conducted by Elie Siegmeister. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 725. \$3.75.

Elie Siegmeister, a student of Nadia Boulanger and Wallingford Riegger, organized the American Ballad Singers in 1939 for the purpose of bringing what he is pleased to call "people's songs" to audiences throughout the country. In the present album will be found six of them for which he composed the music. The lyrics are by such noted poets as Alfred Kreymborg, Rosemary Benet and Lewis Allen. The last named is famous for his *Strange Fruit*, which caused wide comment when it first appeared several years ago.

The American Ballad Singers consist of three male and three female singers and they seem to us to be the outstanding group in the performance of songs

of this character. The reproduction has been successfully accomplished and the surfaces of the records are extremely quiet.

The ballads in this album are: *Johnny Appleseed*; *Lincoln Penny*; *Nancy Hanks*; *Lazy Afternoon*; *John Reed*; and *Paul Bunyan*.

VOCAL



Cowboy Songs and Negro Spirituals. Carl Sandburg, accompanying himself on the guitar. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-356. \$5.

Carl Sandburg the poet, the lecturer, the Lincoln biographer, the singer of folk songs, is a great American personality, and a new album of his recordings is always an event in the world of Americana. The present album will surely be no exception. In addition to those persons who are interested in Cowboy Songs and Negro Spirituals, there is a vast group, one might almost say a cult, who are interested in Carl Sandburg and everything he does, and so this album is born with a waiting audience. We are very happy to report that we are sure that they will not be disappointed, for in these recordings we have Mr. Sandburg at his best—a congenial, pleasant fellow singing the songs that he knows and loves without fuss or feathers but with a sincerity that comes from away down deep in his heart.

Decca has achieved very satisfactory reproduction and has supplied with this album a "Sing-Along-Book" containing the words and music of each song together with pertinent notes that help the uninitiated listener to a better understanding of these ballads and spirituals.

Among the selections Mr. Sandburg has chosen for the present album are: *I Ride an Old Paint*; *Sam Bass*; *Jesse James*; *I Don't Want to be Buried in the Storm*; *Levee Moan*; *O Freedom* and *Wasn't That a Mighty Day*?

Patter Songs from Gilbert and Sullivan—Vol. II. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-670. \$3.25.

Several years ago Columbia issued its first volume of "Patter Songs from Gilbert and Sullivan" sung by Nelson Eddy. It was a great success and has enjoyed a steady sale ever since. The second volume is now ready for distribution. Mr. Eddy is excellent in such amusing ditties, and his nearly perfect diction brings out the humor of the text without any effort on the part of the listener. The present album will provide a lot of fun for G & S fans and may convert many of the younger generation, who are not familiar with these amusing songs.

Mr. Eddy has chosen for this album: *When a Felon's Not Engaged in His Employment* and *When the Foeman Bares His Steel* from "The Pirates of Penzance"; *If You're Anxious for to Shine* from "Pa-

tience"; *When I, Good Friends* from "Trial by Jury"; *My Boy, You May Take It From Me* from "Ruddigore"; *Rising Early in the Morning* from "The Gondoliers"; and *If You Give Me Your Attention and When'er I Spoke* from "Princess Ida."

The text of each selection is printed on the inside covers of this attractive album.

Gems of the Synagogue. Cantor Josef Rosenblatt (tenor) with orchestra and organ accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set S-48. \$3.85.

In releasing this album, RCA Victor is doing a very worth while thing for music in general and Jewish religious music in particular. These recordings were made a number of years ago (Cantor Rosenblatt died in 1933 in Palestine) and were listed in the Victor catalog for several years and then were discontinued. In re-issuing them, many persons who remember Cantor Rosenblatt, having heard him on his many tours of this country, and those who only know of him by hearsay, will have an opportunity of securing recordings by the outstanding Jewish religious singer and composer of his time.

The music for the four selections in the present album was all composed by Cantor Rosenblatt. They are: *Rachem Noo*; *Tal* (For Passach); *Rom W'nisso*; and *Yhi Rozon Milifine Ovinu*. All are part of the Jewish traditional services and are, of course, sung in Hebrew.

Brigadoon—Selections. Alfred Drake, Roberta Roberts, and Bill Venturo, with orchestra conducted by Ted Royal. 2-10" discs in album. Rainbow Set 309. \$2.25.

Of course there is a terrific demand for selections from one of the biggest hits New York has had in years—the musical play "Brigadoon." The first recordings to be released are those in the present album issued by Rainbow. Alfred Drake, who appears on three of the four sides in this album, is an able artist, but we have the impression that he learned these songs in a hurry and dashed off to the recording studio and made the recordings, and Rainbow speeded them through to the dealers. As one listens to them, he has the impression that the whole thing was a rush job and the results are none too satisfactory. The recordings are certainly not up to standard. If you just can't wait for some "Brigadoon" recordings, you'll probably dash out and buy the present set. However, if you will be a bit patient, one of the major companies will very likely bring out a much more satisfactory album.

Herbert: Sweethearts—Selections. Al Goodman and his Orchestra with Earl Wrightson, Frances Greer, Jimmy Carroll, Christina Lind and the Guild Choristers. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-174. \$3.75.

We have been looking for an album of selections from Victor Herbert's *Sweethearts*, which happens

to be our favorite of all of his charming operettas, and we are happy to report that we have found one, and a very satisfactory one it is. It contains all of the principal selections sung by a fine cast and with the superb support of Al Goodman and his Orchestra.

The selections in this pleasing album are: *Sweethearts*; *I Might Be Your Once in a While*; *Every Lover Must Meet His Fate*; *To the Land of My Own Romance*; *Pretty As a Picture*; *Game of Love*; *Angelus*; and *Jeanette and Her Little Wooden Shoes*.

Gypsy Songs of Russia. (Sung in Russian). Adia Kuznetzoff (bass), with the Gleb Yellin Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 731. \$3.75.

Here are some Russian Gypsy songs sung by an artist with a really fine voice and one who is to the manner born. Adia Kuznetzoff was born in the Russian Caucasus and as a boy of fifteen ran away from home and joined a band of gypsies. He finally found his way to America, and since his arrival in this country his rise has been rapid. He is well known for his appearances in opera, on the radio, and in numerous pictures. He is particularly remembered locally for the hit he made in the Philadelphia Opera Company's performance of *Prince Igor* under the direction of Leopold Stokowski.

These recordings have been very successfully accomplished.

Galloway: Whiffenpoof Song. One side, and **Vernor: The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.** Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his Orchestra and male chorus. 1-10" disc (V-10-1313). 75c.

Hollywood could not have dressed up these simple college songs more inappropriately than Russ Case has on this disc. They sound like a mixture of opera, oratorio, and Radio City Music Hall. We have had numerous recordings of *The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi*, some of them quite good, but we have never had even a fair one of *Whiffenpoof Song*. Why not have Nelson Eddy make one? He would probably sing it in a simple unaffected style, and with the support of a good male quartet he should make a really fine recording—one that Yale men might be proud of and cherish with nostalgic affection.

Folk Songs and Ballads—Vol. II. Sung by Susan Reed with zither or Irish harp. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1107. \$3.

Several months ago RCA Victor issued the first album of "Folk Songs and Ballads" sung by Susan Reed. It was a great success, persons who did not think that they were interested in folk music were captivated by the lilt and sparkle of Susan's pleasing voice. We feel sure that her second album will be just as enthusiastically received. It contains: *Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair*; *I'm Sad and I'm Lonely*; *The Widow Malone*; *Danny Boy*; *Green-*

sleeves; *Mother, I Would Marry*; *I Know My Love*; *The Three Gulls*; and *Lord Randall*.

Poor Me (arr. Dett). One side, and **Hold On!** (Spiritual). Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-10" disc (V-10-1278). 75c.

The inspirational spiritual *Hold On!* is coupled on this disc with the somber folk song *Poor Me*. Miss Anderson sings the spiritual with proper spirit and the folk song, which she sings in her lowest register, is presented in a solemn manner bordering on the funereal. Both interpretations are highly artistic and will be welcomed by Miss Anderson's host of admirers. She receives splendid support from her accompanist, Franz Rupp.

Bond: I Love You Truly. One side, and **Bond: Just A-Wearyin' for You.** Allan Jones (tenor) with Robert Armbruster and his orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1289). 75c.

Allan Jones sings these Carrie Jacobs Bond favorites very nicely and they have been well recorded. If they appeal to you, you'll probably be quite satisfied with this record.

Schubert: Die Post (Winterreise No. 13). One side, and **Schubert: Die Nebensonnen** (Winterreise No. 23). (Sung in German). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with piano accompaniment by M. Raucheisen. 1-10" disc (RF-R8372). \$1.25.

Winkler: Again Another Day Passes. One side, and **Bochmann: Stars Above Your Home** (from *Pilot Quax*). (Sung in German). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70077). \$2.50.

Two discs by the German baritone, Karl Schmitt-Walter, whose fame in America is due to his recordings that have enjoyed some popularity in this country. The 10-inch disc contains two selections from Schubert's *Die Winterreise*, the 12-inch, made of non-breakable Vinylite, contains two popular selections probably from German films. Herr Schmitt-Walter has an excellent voice of pleasing quality and the recordings have been successfully accomplished.

PIANO



Piano Moods. Jeanne Therrien (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 126. \$4.75.

The Texas born pianist, Jeanne Therrien, graduate of Juilliard and winner of both the Naumburg and Leventritt awards, presents as fine a group of piano recordings as we have heard in a long time. The selections are ones that any music lover may enjoy. All of them are music of the highest calibre, yet each is melodious and will be familiar to all intelligent listeners. Miss Therrien has an easy graceful style

of playing that makes it possible for one to listen to her for long periods of time without becoming tired. These discs on an automatic phonograph will provide a most pleasing half-hour of delightful piano music.

There is great variety in this album—brilliant preludes of Chopin, subtle Debussy pieces, selections by Liszt, Grieg, Scarlatti, the famous *Malaguena* by Lecuona and Rachmaninoff's *Prelude in G major*. A fine feast for those who are pianistically inclined.

Of particular interest is the excellence of the records themselves. They are the finest Vinylite discs that we have ever come across. They have absolutely smooth, quiet surfaces without that crackle that is prevalent on so many records made of Vinylite. They are beautifully finished with smooth rounded edges that will not cut through the album envelopes. Other manufacturers might take these discs as models and make it their aim to improve their records to meet the standard that Pilotone has set. R.

Siegmeister: American Sonata. Elie Siegmeister (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 773. \$3.35.

As Elie Siegmeister performs his music on these discs, it seems appropriate for him to describe it in this review. Therefore we quote from the notes that he has supplied for this album.

"I had been touring with my American Ballad Singers, and had been immersed in the idea of using folk and 'pop' style themes in my work; in Chicago I heard a wonderful boogie-woogie pianist. I resolved to write a work that would incorporate these many moods, and express different aspects of our modern life. The result was *American Sonata*, written in June 1944.

"In the various sections the listener may feel the quality of rumba, boogie, ballad, spiritual, cowboy; but I hope the work stands up as a unified work of music, which is what I think any work, regardless of its material, should be."

Unquestionably this work has some merit, but to the uninitiated it cannot help sounding like quite a hodgepodge. In time, we oldtimers may get used to such music, and in fact we may learn to enjoy it, but at present it is quite a big pill to swallow. We recommend this album to those music lovers who are young and adventuresome.

Saint-Saëns: Caprice on the Airs de Ballet from the Opera "Alceste" by Gluck. Guiomar Novaës (piano). 1-12" disc (C-71961D). \$1.

It has been a long time since we have had any new recordings by the distinguished Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaës. Her return to the recording studio is very welcome and just as welcome is her choice of selection for this disc. It is the very pleasing *Caprice* which Saint-Saëns arranged from the ballet music of Gluck's opera *Alceste*. It is unusual, with its music box melodies, and a real joy to listen to. Miss Novaës

gives an utterly charming performance, and the piano reproduction is first-class.

Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit—Ondine. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9260). \$1.

Ondine is the first and longest of the three pieces that make up Ravel's fascinating suite *Gaspard de la nuit*. We remember a fine recording of the complete suite by Walter Gieseking, which has now disappeared from the Columbia catalog. The present recording by Brailowsky is highly satisfactory—perhaps he will some day record the other two numbers, which are quite short and could be placed on a single 12-inch disc.

Chopin: Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Songs Without Words** (Elegy, Op. 85, No. 4 and Spring Song, Op. 62, No. 6). Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9519). \$1.

Horowitz gives splendid performances of these lovely short pieces from the literature for the piano. Those who enjoy selections that are familiar to them, beautifully and sympathetically played, will certainly be enthusiastic about this disc. The piano reproduction is superior.

Debussy: Toccata. One side, and **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin—Toccata.** Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3487). \$1.90.

Modern recordings are needed of both of these selections but we wish that someone had been chosen who would not have gone at them quite so vigorously. Moiseiwitsch, in an apparent effort to make them sound important, misses the subtle charm of both of these lovely selections. In the concert hall this treatment may bring great applause from the unthinking but in the quiet of one's music room these recordings sound more startling than pleasing. Although the label does not mention it, the Debussy *Toccata* is the third piece in the suite "Pour le Piano" (1901).

Chopin: Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53. First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-46-0005). \$1.

If you aren't tired of this "Polonaise," which has been played to death recently, perhaps you might like this "four piano" version. The arrangement is quite tricky, and it has been well-recorded.

DICTION



Shakespeare: The Comedy of Errors (Adapted by Beauvais Fox). Charles Coburn (narrator) with supporting cast and Harold Stokes and his Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set Y-608. \$4.35.

The subtitle of this album is "Fun With Mister Shakespeare" and that is just about what it is. Charles Coburn tells the complicated story of *The Comedy*

of *Errors* in his inimitable way with the aid of a fine cast of players. However, while the whole thing is quite amusing, we would say that it is very much more Coburn than Shakespeare. We happen to be very familiar with the story and so we had no difficulty in following Mr. Coburn; in fact several times we thought that he was going to get mixed up himself with the two Dromios and their twin masters, but he didn't. He came through with flying colors. Whether persons not so familiar with the plot will be able to follow the narrator, is a question. In any case, most listeners will get a smile or two from the ridiculous story and we guess that is the chief purpose of this album. The recording has been nicely accomplished on unbreakable discs.

CHILDREN



Cinderella. Jeanette MacDonald and cast with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set Y-327. \$3.

Uncle Remus Stories. Norman Cordon and cast with Henri René and his Orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set Y-328. \$3.

These days there are lots of recordings for children released by various publishers, but only occasionally do we come across really fine ones. The two albums listed above may be classed among the "really fine" ones. The stories are splendidly recorded on non-breakable records and housed in very attractive albums with pictures in full colors on the inside and outside covers. Both Miss MacDonald and Mr. Cordon make excellent story tellers and each adds to the charm of the recordings by adding several pleasing vocal selections with original music by William Provost.

We do not hesitate to recommend these albums to the most particular parents. The text, the music, and the pictures are all in the best of taste.

Artie Shaw's Pied Piper. Artie Shaw and his Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Musicraft Set N-10. \$3.

The old, old story "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" brought up to the minute by Artie Shaw with his clarinet, and a swell supporting cast, with Arthur Q. Bryan as the Mayor, Edwin Max as the Pied Piper and the narration by Harry Von Zell. A grand orchestral background is supplied by Artie Shaw's Orchestra. Youngsters of all ages should go for this clever recording by Musicraft. Occasionally an album is issued for children that is a "natural" and this one may be classed in that category.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Record Book (Complete Edition. Reprint). By David Hall. xvii+1063 pp. The Citadel Press (New York). Price \$2.98.

With Strings Attached: Reminiscences and Reflections. By Joseph Szigeti. Illustrated. 341+xvii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aech, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polyder, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U.S.A.

VOL. 15. NO. 4

JUNE 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The interest in collecting records of historic value has grown greatly in the last decade, but little has been written to help those who indulge in that fascinating hobby. Robert Bauer's *Historical Records* was published in Italy in 1937 in a small edition of 300 copies. This book, which was simply a catalog of the recordings of outstanding artists made before 1910, has long since been out-of-print. P. G. Hurst, the author of the present *The Golden Age Recorded*, co-operated with Mr. Bauer and wrote the foreword for his book. Mr. Hurst is probably the greatest living authority on the recordings of the great artists of "The Golden Age of Song," the bulk of whose recordings were made in that short period between 1900 and 1907. These recordings are the keystone of any collection of historic records. Information about these artists and their recordings is most difficult to come by, therefore, Mr. Hurst's book is of prime importance to all collectors. It contains thumbnail biographies of well over one hundred of these great artists, and the author has supplied lists of records made by at least eighty of them, with record numbers, manufacturers indicated, label descriptions, and the year the particular recording was made.

The first forty-one pages of Mr. Hurst's book are devoted to a most interesting Introduction; a chapter on "Origins of the cult of collecting rare and historical records;" a very short essay on "The Early Gramophone;" a chapter describing the various labels with a most helpful key to the catalog numbers on G & T records; and a chapter on "Values." This last mentioned chapter is of prime importance to all

persons interested in this hobby. It, of course, does not quote prices, but it does indicate a method of evaluating rare discs. It points out that "rarity alone is not enough," but that the disc must have musical merit, and if in addition to that, the personality of the artist still remains bright in the minds of the present generation, records by that artist are of added value. Such artists are Melba, Patti, Caruso, Tamagno *et al.*

Greater books on this fascinating subject will doubtless appear in the future, but we are strongly of the opinion that they will have to come to *The Golden Age Recorded* for much of their source material. These books will not appear until the publishers feel that there is a large enough market for them. You will note that Mr. Hurst did not secure a publisher. The small present edition of this book was published by the author at his own expense. Perhaps if it sells rapidly, as we rather expect that it will—for we can hardly imagine a collector not wanting a copy—a publisher will be found who will issue it in an edition sufficiently large to cover the world market. At present the few copies that are available for the U.S.A. have been imported by the publishers of this bulletin.

* * *

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The title of this book fully describes it. Schubert's music is considered from various angles by persons who are authorities on its several classifications. The book is really a series of essays. After a very brief biographical sketch by Otto Erich Deutsch entitled "Schubert the Man," a series of essays follow: "The Orchestral Music" by Mosco Carner; "The Chamber Music" by J. A. Westrup; "The Piano Music" by Kathleen Dale; "The Songs" by Alec Robertson; "Music for the Stage" by A. Hyatt

King; "Church and Choral Music" by Carl A. Rosenthal and Abram Loft; and "The Schubert Idiom" by T. C. L. Pritchard. Following these essays is an extensive bibliography, a chronological list of compositions with page references, and some forty pages of musical examples that have been mentioned previously in the text.

The Music of Schubert is a comprehensive reference book for those music lovers who are particularly interested in the works of that great composer. It should be of especial value to music libraries and to all institutions of musical learning. It has been diligently prepared by its various authors and carefully edited by the distinguished English critic, Gerald Abraham.

* * *

A substantial shipment of English Parlophone records arrived recently. Among them are recordings by such important artists as: Richard Tauber, the late Conchita Supervia, Lotte Lehmann, Claudio Arrau, Lina Pagliughi, Simon Goldberg, Lili Kraus, Ebe Stignani, Gina Cigna and Eileen Joyce. The more important items will be reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS as space is available. However, a 24-page booklet listing all of them is available and will be mailed gratis to all who request it as long as our supply lasts.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of *excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17 ("Little Russian"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-673. \$6.

Despite the fact that there is an excellent record-

ing of this seldom heard symphony by Goossens and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, issued six or seven years ago, this new performance by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra is welcome.

Mr. Mitropoulos is particularly well equipped to play the music of Tchaikovsky, and in this recording he proves that this is not an exception to the rule.

The *Symphony No. 2* or "Little Russian," as it is often known, is a far more objective piece of music than the later symphonies of this sorrowing Russian. It is also the most nationalistic in flavor, particularly in its fine opening movement, which reminds one of the music of Moussorgsky.

There is variety in the four movements. Playing the set through, one often wondered why the composition does not figure more often on our orchestral programs. One supposes that such things are more a matter of fashion and custom than anything else.

For those who may very well be surfeited with the ceaseless programming of Tchaikovsky's later symphonies, an investigation of this fine and neglected early work may be very well worthwhile. This is particularly so, when the symphony is played with such brilliance and authority as Mitropoulos bestows upon it.

Surfaces, in this particular set, were, regrettably, not uniformly good. MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Blitzstein: Symphony: The Airborne. Robert Shaw (narrator), Charles Holland (tenor), Walter Scheff (baritone), RCA Victor Chorale, and the New York City Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Thirteen sides, and **Blitzstein: Dusty Sun.** Walter Scheff (baritone) with piano accompaniment by Leonard Bernstein. 7-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1117. \$7.85.

The Airborne is a symphony in the sense that Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* is a "dramatic symphony." It is about fifty minutes in length, and is scored for a Speaker (called a "Monitor"), male chorus, solo tenor, solo baritone, and full orchestra. Blitzstein conceived the idea for this work while he was serving with the Eighth Air Force, to which it is dedicated. On April 1, 1946, *The Airborne* received its world premiere in New York by the group which has here recorded it (except for the narrator).

Generally speaking, *The Airborne* deals with the history of human flight. The work is divided into three large sections: Man's mastery of the art of flight, Flight as an agent for man's destruction, and Flight as an agent for the destruction of tyranny and the building of a better world. The dramatic action is carried forward through the spoken words of the narrator, or Monitor, while the portions of the score allotted to the soloists, the chorus, and the orchestra are in the nature of commentary, elaboration, and dramatic intensification. The complete text is supplied with the album, and it is necessary to follow it

to fully appreciate the work. Also supplied is a most elaborate set of notes by David Hall which provide valuable background material as a preparation for hearing *The Airborne*.

We can say *The Airborne* left a deeply etched impression on us. It is a work that "packs a wallop." Blitzstein has without doubt realized his intentions brilliantly, and whether or not one cares for this style of art, there can be no question of the sincerity and remarkable workmanship of the score. To us, it is far ahead of a work such as Randall Thompson's *The Testament of Freedom*. Blitzstein is eminently successful in fusing words and music.

The performers in this recording give an intense, blazing account of the work. The quiet sections are handled with sincerity and the proper quality to provide fine contrasts. Victor has accomplished the very difficult task of recording well indeed, achieving fine balance throughout. We can easily recommend the work highly as a performance. Whether you like the work for what it is can be determined only by hearing it, and by all means hear it through entirely and without distraction. It seems to be a monumental work; we would like to know what the next generation or two will think of it. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C (Old B. & H. No. 7). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-679. \$7.

Columbia shows improvement in their conception of recorded string tone with this issue. While the strings have not quite the lustre and sheen of Decca, HMV, and some Victor, they have considerably less of that paper-thin sizzling tone that characterized some of Columbia's later efforts. The balance generally is good, and the woodwind passages are invariably crystalline and sweet. All in all it's a nice job of reproduction, and the surfaces of our set were uniformly quiet.

Those who are familiar with Bruno Walter's individual reading of the Schubert *Ninth* will find his lovely phrasing, warm approach, and broad over-all conception of this mighty masterpiece as they have come to expect it. After all, the prime criterion of any interpretation is whether or not it is convincing, and Walter's reading of this work certainly is that. He has done a great deal of work on this score and uses his own specially prepared and elaborately marked scores for the orchestral musicians at every performance.

Written in the thirty-first—and last—year of his life, Schubert never lived to hear his symphonic masterpiece performed. Schumann rediscovered the music ten years later, and sent it to Mendelssohn who performed it in 1839. In commemoration of the 150th anniversary, this year, of the birth of Schubert, Columbia issues this fine set, which easily supersedes previous versions. Every library containing a dozen or more symphonies should include this one. S.

Thomson: The Plow that Broke the Plains. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1116. \$2.85.

Contemporary American music by one of our most distinguished composers, *The Plow that Broke the Plains*, is music that is thoroughly understandable on first hearing. There is a complete absence of those qualities which alienate contemporary music from the tastes of many persons. This music is as unassuming as a hamburger, and just as likeably familiar; yet it is not common, trashy, or obviously jazzy. Virgil Thomson's simplicity and craftsmanship are evident through the songlike melodies he employs; and the work emerges as a melodious and descriptive work first and always. In short, we liked it a lot because it is naturally charming music, and we feel safe in recommending it to anyone.

In 1936 the U. S. Farm Security Administration issued a striking documentary film entitled "The Plow that Broke the Plains." It told the terrible saga of what happened during the middle thirties to the wheatlands of America's Great Plains and to the people that lived there—the tragic evolution of the plains from grasslands to wheatfields to drought and dust-bowl. Virgil Thomson composed the score for the film, underlining the story's highlights and creating the proper atmosphere. The titles of the movements of the suite here recorded are: Prelude, Grass, Cattle Songs, Blues, Drought, and Devastation.

Leopold Stokowski conducts this music wonderfully, and the reproduction of the orchestra is absolutely first class. Surfaces on our set are very good. S.

Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-680. \$4.

Not having read the New York critics' reviews of this work when it received its world premiere on January 24, 1946, we approached this work with no pre-conceived notions, for we do not recall having heard it prior to this recording. It is therefore with an uneasy feeling that we report this work left us rather cold and unmoved. Several hearings have done little to change our opinion. Posterity may hail this work as a masterpiece; but their ears will have become attuned to different styles if they do take a fancy to it. It is hard to say the work is arid. It is not constructed by conventional means such as classic and romantic works. This symphony is based on (so we are told) additive construction, the principle of which is a succession of clearly outlined blocks, or planes. We found it, so indeed, and may add it seemed fragmentary too.

Composed in Hollywood in 1945 especially for the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, it is dedicated to that organization as an homage and appreciation

of Stravinsky's twenty years' association with them. It has admittedly no program. The three movements are marked Overture (Allegro), Andante, and Con moto. Columbia's advance publicity notes state that even the untutored listener will respond to a rhythmic drive and exciting intermingling of themes, reminiscent of the composer of the *Sacre du Printemps* and earlier ballet music. We admit quite a bit of rhythmic drive, but our untutored ears could not figure out where we were driving. We suggest our readers hear this one for themselves.

The stamp of authenticity is obviously on this recording, as Stravinsky himself is reading the work. Columbia's tone quality is of the hard and biting variety (appropriately?); surfaces were quiet. S.

Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C for String Orchestra, Op. 48. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-677. \$4.

In this recording the sumptuous quality of the strings of the Philadelphia Orchestra is strikingly revealed and the vast host of admirers of this great musical organization may justly feel a sense of pride in the fine performance achieved on these discs.

This work in four movements, of which the second, a charming waltz is best-known and of which numerous separate recordings have been released, is not great music but generally quite pleasant to listen to. The first movement *Pezzo in forma di sonatina* is in the style of Mozart, and Tchaikovsky stated that it was his homage to that great composer. The third movement, *Elegia*, is the only one with a serious, somewhat somber mood. The final movement, *Tema Russo*, after a short slow section, dashes off into a lively part based on a Russian folk song and finishes with the repetition of a theme from the first movement.

It is said that Tchaikovsky was particularly fond of this work, and we wonder if it was not because it was so well received whenever the composer placed it on his programs. He is reported to have played it many times, both on the Continent and in England, and also in America upon his visit to this country.

Menotti: Sebastian—Ballet Suite. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-278. \$3.

This is a very appropriate time to release a recording of Gian-Carlo Menotti's first ballet, *Sebastian*, because of the success his operatic novelties *The Medium* and *The Telephone* have recently had on the New York stage.

Sebastian is based on the composer's own scenario with choreography by Edward Caton. It was first produced by the Ballet International in 1944 and since that time has had many successful performances in various cities throughout the United States. The plot is a fascinating one and an understanding of it

is helpful to a fuller appreciation of the music. Fortunately it is outlined in considerable detail in the notes that accompany this album so that one may read as he listens.

The Robin Hood Dell Orchestra, under the brilliant direction of Mitropoulos, gives a splendid performance, and the reproduction is top-notch.

Adam—arr. Lambert: Giselle—Ballet Suite. Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden conducted by Constant Lambert. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-277. \$3.

Those persons who are fond of ballet music will doubtless delight in this recording of one of the oldest ballets in the present repertory. It dates from 1841, and is based on the legend about maidens that die before they are wed and come from their graves at night dressed in white and dance until dawn. Should a man encounter these "wilis" in their nightly revels, he is doomed to dance on and on until he drops dead from exhaustion.

This music is sprightly, and is nicely performed by a fine orchestra under the direction of the arranger, Constant Lambert. As usual, the English recording is excellent.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F. Three sides, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D.** Roger Voisin (trumpet), George Laurent (flute), Fernand Gillet (oboe), Richard Burgin (violin), Lukas Foss (piano), and the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1118. \$4.85.

This is the second album in a series that will eventually contain all six of the Brandenburg Concertos recorded at Tanglewood, Lenox, Mass., with an orchestra of the approximate size as the ones for which Bach wrote. The first volume, which was issued by RCA Victor in June 1946, contained the Third and Fourth Brandenburg Concertos. That volume received the highest praise of the critics and was welcomed by a host of discerning music lovers. Therefore, the present volume, which is in every way as fine as the first, should hold a wide appeal for those who appreciate music of this character.

Coates: The Three Elizabeths. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-8. \$5.

This pleasant suite which Eric Coates wrote several years ago is in three sections, namely: *Elizabeth Tudor—Halcyon Days*; *Elizabeth of Glamis—Spring in Forfarshire*; and *The Princess Elizabeth—Youth of Britain March*. It is typical of the light music that our British cousins seem to like so much but which has but a limited appeal in this country.

The principal feature of this set is the realistic reproduction that English Decca has achieved. These are first records made in England.

Chopin—orch. by Anderson and Bodge: *Les Sylphides*. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1119. \$3.85.

Recently there has been a great revival of Chopin's music. One hears it everywhere, on the radio, on the screen, and in the concert halls. Therefore this ballet based upon some of the composer's best-loved melodies should have a wide appeal. This is particularly true because of the fine performance that Arthur Fiedler gives on these discs and because of the excellence of the RCA Victor reproduction.

Sibelius: Karelia Suite, Op. 11—Intermezzo (No. 1) and Alla marcia (No. 3). B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-11-9568). \$1.

A few copies of the imported pressing of this record reached America about a year ago and those collectors who were fortunate enough to secure a copy prized it highly. Sir Thomas is in fine form, and the Sibelius music is fascinating to say the least. Now that RCA Victor has made it generally available, it should enjoy a wide popularity.

Strauss, Johann, Jr.: Perpetuum Mobile, Op. 257 and Strauss, Johann, Sr.: Radetzky March, Op. 228. One side, and **Strauss, Eduard: Race Track—Galop, Op. 45 and Strauss, Johann, Jr.: Thunder and Lightning—Polka, Op. 324.** Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (C-12543 D). \$1.

Some lively music by the famous Strauss family played with gay spirit by the Cleveland Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Erich Leinsdorf. Splendidly recorded by Columbia.

Boieldieu: La Dame Blanche—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12 disc (V-11-9569). \$1.

The Boston "Pops" are "tops" in light tuneful music of this character. We don't recall another domestic recording of this overture and so the present disc is doubly welcome. Reproduction—excellent.

CONCERTO



Bartók: Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra.

Gyorgy Sandor (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-674. \$4.

This is the first recording of one of the major works of one of the most admired of modern composers. Béla Bartók died on September 26, 1945. His was a most distinctive and original musical mind.

The *Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra* was Bartók's last composition. He worked at it during his final year of illness; in fact, the last 17 measures, already sketched out by the composer, were completed

after his death by his friend, Tibor Serly.

The *Concerto* received its first performance anywhere by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting, on February 8, 1946, with Bartók's friend and disciple, Gyorgy Sandor, as the soloist. It is these artists that are employed by Columbia for this important first recording, and therefore those who own the album will also own a performance by the concerto's original interpreters.

The work bears the stamp of the man who wrote it. It is of ideal length—22 minutes—and there are no waste motions. It is strong and original in conception with a constant play of creative musical fantasy.

The spasmodic, restless urgency of the opening movement wields a strange fascination and is charged with an unflagging virility of expression. The second movement offers deep contrast with its chorale-like theme for the piano and its soothing passages for strings. A charming trio, full of invention, divides this captivating movement, like a brief glimpse into a world of nature teeming with life. A passionate climax is reached before the movement dies away. The third movement with its spirited Rondo in three-eighths time is of the utmost vigor and complexity, and boasts a brilliant finale for soloist and orchestra.

Gyorgy Sandor is the possessor of a wonderful set of fingers, and his work not only carries authority but stands out clearly etched at all times against the orchestral background. The Philadelphia Orchestra, under Ormandy, plays the work as though the men liked it.

You will find the recording unusually clear, vivid and well-balanced. The fine woodwind section of the Philadelphia Orchestra has been particularly faithfully reproduced.

It is nice to report that the surfaces are unobtrusive in what emerges as a distinguished and important recording.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 2 in G, Op. 44. Shura Cherkassky (piano) with the Santa Monica Symphony conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 4-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AM. \$9.

It looks as though Concert Hall Society has in this recording an item that will cause quite some excitement. Although this work was recorded in England by Benno Moiseiwitsch and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra about a year ago, so few copies have reached America that to most collectors this will be their first opportunity of hearing a recording of it. In fact, because it is so seldom played, many persons will hear this concerto for the first time on these discs. To many music lovers this will be a new work by Tchaikovsky—a composer who has been dead for half a century.

It was written during several years prior to 1882 and was first performed in that year at the Moscow Exposition of Industrial Arts. Anton Rubinstein con-

ducted the orchestra and Taneyev was the pianist. It was greeted with wild acclaim but it is pretty generally conceded that the applause was for the performers and the composer rather than for the composition itself. Its life in the concert hall was a short one and except for very occasional performances, it has disappeared from concert programs entirely. There are several reasons for this. In the first place the piano part is most difficult, and most pianists do not think that it is worthy of the great effort required to learn and properly play it. It seems to start nowhere and ramble along without any definite destination until it finally comes to the end. It has plenty of Tchaikovsky color and abounds in pleasing melodies. There is a long cadenza for the pianist in the first movement; there are long and important passages for solo violin and violoncello in the second movement; the finale contains a lot of lively tunes *allegro con fuoco*. In fact it seems to have too much of everything. Critics may say what they please but they cannot accuse this concerto of being dull. It has been called a symphony with piano obbligato, and it has been termed a triple concerto for piano, violin and 'cello, but it has never been called dull.

Concert Hall Society has achieved a fairly satisfactory recording. Cherkassky gives a highly artistic performance which is noted for its restraint and refinement. He is adequately supported by the Santa Monica Symphony under the intelligent direction of Jacques Rachmilovich. It is interesting to note that this orchestra is composed of "the top symphony musicians who earn their living in the Hollywood motion picture studios and who began in 1943 to gather for weekly sessions of symphonic playing for pleasure. This orchestra became the Santa Monica Symphony . . ." The reproduction is good but outstanding, and there are bad breaks at the end of several record sides. The record surfaces are above average for smoothness—the discs are made of unbreakable plastic.

R.

Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1941).

Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1120. \$5.85.

It seems too bad, but it is a fact that very often a composer is not properly appreciated until he passes to the Great Beyond. This is somewhat the case with the great Hungarian composer, Béla Bartók. He spent the last several years of his life in America before his death in 1945, but it is only recently that his music is being heard to any extent in this country. Koussevitzky and Menuhin have both done much to promote its popularity.

The present concerto may sound a bit strange to ears not accustomed to Bartók's music, but we can assure our readers that it is well worth the effort it takes to appreciate it. It requires several hearings, but each hearing will bring forth ample reward. Menuhin, who was a personal friend of the composer,

puts his whole heart and soul into this performance and we cannot imagine a better one. The recording has been faithfully achieved.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30.

Cyril Smith (piano) with the City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-671. \$6.

The distinguished British pianist, Cyril Smith, makes his debut on domestic Columbia records with this repressing of the English Columbia recording of Rachmaninoff's *Third Concerto*. Cyril Smith is a justly celebrated pianist in England, and imported copies of some of his records have been widely admired. It is therefore highly regrettable that this set must bear comparison with the Victor version played by Rachmaninoff with the Philadelphia Orchestra (M-710). Horowitz made an earlier set (M-117) with the London Symphony which was also a top-notch, but the superb finesse with which Rachmaninoff plays this work is virtually unapproachable. His performance is the quintessence of subtle shading, and it is just that which is needed to perform this lush score. Rachmaninoff was eminently successful in serving the public with ear-tickling music that combined a pleasant melodic line with huge technical brilliance and bravura, and always served with creamy and chromatic harmony. They loved it, and they still do, and will love it for some time to come. And how he himself could play it!

Ormandy and the Philadelphians, with the composer, were accorded far more brilliant and trenchant reproduction than Cyril Smith. The present set tends to be tubby, and cloudy in the *tutti* passages. Were it not for this, Smith's performance, as we imagine it must be, would stand well on its own merits—admirable indeed. But the odds are definitely against it.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Sonata in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1. William Primrose (viola) and William Kapell (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1106. \$3.85.

In August 1943, Columbia issued a recording of the Brahms *Sonata No. 1 in F Minor* by Samuel Lifschey and Egon Petri, and it proved a most successful accomplishment. Now RCA Victor comes along with a new performance of the work by William Primrose and William Kapell.

This is one of two sonatas which Brahms composed for clarinet and piano in 1894. The viola's register, being the same as the clarinet's, the sonata is heard far more often with this instrument today. The sonatas, particularly the one under discussion, represent Brahms as his most romantic and at his height in matters of form and depth of feeling.

A choice between Columbia and Victor's albums

boils down to a personal preference. Both performers are excellent, with our own choice inclining towards the Messrs. Lifschey and Petri.

Mr. Primrose's tone is sensuously beautiful, and Mr. Kapell reminds one that he doesn't have to be relegated to the Khatchaturian Concerto for the rest of his days. Recording and surfaces excellent. D.

Kauder: Sonata for English Horn and Piano. Louis Speyer (English horn) and Erwin Bodky (piano). Three sides, and **Kauder: Improvization for English Horn Alone.** Louis Speyer (English horn). 2-10" discs in album. Night Music Set No. 105. \$4.

Hugo Kauder was born in Czechoslovakia; he lived and worked in Vienna until 1938. Since then he has made his home in the United States and devotes his time to composition and teaching. He has many works to his credit, including two symphonies, nine string quartets, and numerous compositions for small groups of instruments. His eighth string quartet was recently performed by the Stradivarius Quartet, his fourth and seventh by the Gordon Quartet.

Kauder has developed a new "tonal relationship," which is described at length in the notes that accompany this album. These illuminating notes were written by Edward E. Lowinsky, Professor of Music, Black Mountain College. The selections in this album are excellent examples of Kauder's unique technique and will be of great interest to all students of modern music.

In presenting his music to the general public through the present recordings, Kauder has the great advantage of having it performed by two outstanding artists. Louis Speyer has spent nearly thirty years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, most of this time as first-desk English Horn Player. Erwin Bodky is a distinguished concert pianist. He was introduced by Wilhelm Furtwaengler as soloist of the famous Gewandhaus Concerts in Leipzig. In the United States, he has appeared in numerous recitals and with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Koussevitzky.

The reproduction on these non-breakable Vinylite discs is superior.

ORGAN



Wagner: Lohengrin—Bridal Chorus. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream—Wedding March.** Fred Feibel playing the Paramount Theatre Organ, New York City. 1-12" disc (C-7528M). \$1.

Just in time for June brides! However, if Columbia's older record of these same selections played by Quentin M. MacLean (C-361-M) is still available, we suggest that you compare it with this one. In our opinion, Mr. MacLean gives much more artistic performances.

OPERA



Verdi: I Due Foscari—O Vecchio cor, che batti. One side, and **Franchetti: Germania—Ferito Prigionier.** (Sung in Italian). Pasquale Amato (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1005). \$3.50.

Verdi: Aida—O cieli azzurri (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera—Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa** (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Celestina Boninsegna (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1006). \$3.50.

Mozart: Magic Flute—Invocation (Act II). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Ferrari: Le Lazzarone and Georges: Le Flibustier.** (Sung in French). Pol Plançon (bass) with piano. 1-12" disc (V-15-1007). \$3.50.

Bizet: Carmen—Habanera (Act I). One side, and **Massé: Paul et Virginie—Chanson du Tigre.** (Sung in French). Jeanne Gerville-Réache (contralto) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1008). \$3.50.

Puccini: La Bohème—Ah, Mimi, tu più non torni (Act IV). John McCormack (tenor) and Mario Sammarco (baritone) with orchestra. One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata—Parigi, O cara** (Act III). Lucrezia Bori (soprano) and John McCormack (tenor) with orchestra. (Both sung in Italian). 1-12" disc (V-15-1009). \$3.50.

RCA Victor's second issue of the Heritage Series contains a very interesting selection. Those of us who have operatic memories that reach back into the past, have a way of speaking nostalgically—and with good reason—of the good old days. Well, here they are!

In the first place we have two unfamiliar arias superbly sung by Pasquale Amato (1878-1942). Gifted with one of the most brilliant baritone voices of all time, this great singer is heard in *Ferito Prigionier* from Franchetti's *Germania* and *O Vecchio cor* from Verdi's *I Due Foscari*. Amato, incidentally, created the role of Worms in *Germania's* American premiere at the Metropolitan in 1910 with Destinn and Caruso under Toscanini.

Celestina Boninsegna (1877-1947), so recently dead, sings *O cieli azzurri* from *Aida* and *Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa* from *Ballo in Maschera* with tones of spectacular intensity. Hers was a dramatic soprano of the real Verdi school, a voice which boasted effortlessly attained high notes of remarkable strength and freedom, and an unusually powerful and dark lower range. These features are signally present in these two arias.

Jeanne Gerville-Réache (1882-1915) has the type of contralto voice which does not exist today. Its breadth, opulence and color savor of an age when these things were not so rare. Her *Habanera* from

Carmen is the most seductive on records, while the thrilling effect of her singing will come as a revelation to the listener in the fascinating and rarely heard *Air du Tigre* from Massé's *Paul et Virginie*.

Pol Plançon (1854-1914), the greatest of French bassos, perhaps the greatest of all bassos, can now be heard in the *Invocation* from the *Magic Flute*, Ferrari's *Le Lazzarone* and Georges' *Le Flibustier*. Caruso once said of Plançon, "He sings too well," and listening to these records, one can appreciate what he meant. Here you will find the tonal smoothness of a 'cello.

John McCormack (1884-1945) is offered in two duets with celebrated singers—*Parigi, o cara* from *Traviata* with Lucrezia Bori, and *Oh Mimi tu Piu* from *Bohème* with the baritone Mario Sammarco (1873-1930). In the opinion of this reviewer, these are the outstanding performances of these particular selections to be obtained on records.

Again one notices that the red vinylite brings out the tone of the records with increased depth and vividness. Were it not for occasional annoying small clicks on these surfaces, our enthusiasm would be completely unqualified. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Laceri miseri (Romanza di Beppe). One side, and **Thomas: Mignon**—Non conosci il bel suol (Act I). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25041). \$3.09.

Bellini: Norma—Casta Diva (Act I). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.R.A. Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25097). \$3.09.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Condotta ell'era in ceppi. Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) and Nino Conti (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia**—Una voce poco fa (Act I). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25098). \$3.09. All the above sung in Italian.

Three-pocket Stignani souvenir album to hold the above records available \$1.

There is no doubt that Ebe Stignani has a whale of a voice! It is so extraordinary in its range, power, and flexibility, that it is hard to classify. The singer, listed as a mezzo-soprano, also sings contralto roles, but in reality hers is a superb dramatic soprano, as the examples in this album from *Norma* and *Barbiere di Siviglia* attest.

Casta Diva presents no problem to this singer. The aria is sung in key and with easily executed vocal embellishment. There is also no doubt about the high C with which she tops the cabaletta, *Ah, bello a me ritorni*.

Rossini, on hearing Adelina Patti sing *Una voce*

poco fa with all her coloratura magic, exclaimed, "Very pretty. Whose music is it?" Rossini would have had no doubt and would have undoubtedly approved of Mme. Stignani's singing of his music. If you follow the score, you will see that she sings the aria, note for note, as Rossini wrote it—even the key is the original. This is rare indeed and makes the record doubly interesting.

The arias from *Trovatore*, *Mignon* and the less well-known one from Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*, also serve to impress one with this remarkable voice. They are gorgeously sung. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mozart: Il Seraglio—Ah, chi amando era felice (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Il Seraglio**—Oh che gioia che piacer (Act II). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. LaRosa Parodi. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25010). \$3.09.

Gomez: Il Guarany—O come e bello il ciel. Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25086). \$3.09.

Verdi: Falstaff—Sul fil d'un soffio etesio (Act III). One side, and **Giordano: Il Re**—O colombello sposarti. Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25093). \$3.09.

Rossini: Semiramide—Bel raggio lusinghier (Act I). One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—Aria di Micaela (Act III). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. LaRosa Parodi. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25110). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Four-pocket Pagliughi souvenir album to hold the above records available, \$1.

This writer remembers a visit to Luisa Tetrazzini in Milan ten years ago, when that great singer stated in no uncertain terms, that she thought Lina Pagliughi not only the best coloratura singing before the public, but also that she considered her her successor.

Mme. Tetrazzini's enthusiasm will be readily understood when one listens to these beautiful records by a singer who commands the unusual combination of a voice of great transparency and sweetness with impressive power.

Mme. Pagliughi is equally at home in lyric roles as her records from *Falstaff*, *Carmen* and Umberto Giordano's *Il Re* clearly show. This latter aria is a charming piece of music, and so is the seldom heard and extended *scena* from Gomez's *Il Guarany*, two notable additions to unfamiliar operatic music.

Mme. Pagliughi's singing of Bel raggio from Rossini's *Semiramide* is a model of clarity and good style. There are two thrilling high E naturals, for those who delight in these things. The singer also sings arias from Mozart's *Seraglio*, and displays an exquisite

Mozartian style.

The orchestral accompaniments are unusually good, especially so in the two Mozart selections, and the recording does this lovely singer full justice.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Weber: Oberon—Piangi mio cuor. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Porgi amor (Act II). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by F. Previtali. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25088). \$3.09.

Monteverdi: Arianna—Lasciatemi morire (Lamento d'Arianna). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. Simonetto. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25087). \$3.09.

Wagner: Tannhauser—Elizabeth's Greeting (Act II). One side, and **Wagner: Tannhauser**—Elizabeth's Prayer (Act III). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. Simonetto. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25076). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Gabriella Gatti, the soprano already admired in Cetra's complete recording of *The Seasons*, here further establishes herself as a singer of classic music to be reckoned with.

Signorina Gatti has a warm, dark lyric soprano which lends itself to quiet legato singing with haunting effect. That she is more successful in this type of music than in the bombastic and climactic aria, is wonderfully well demonstrated by her Elizabeth's Prayer from *Tannhauser*, which is so superior to her unexciting singing of Elizabeth's Greeting to the Hall of Song, on the reverse side.

Signorina Gatti can always be counted on for something unusual, and she does not disappoint here. Her Lamento di Arianna from Claudio Monteverdi's *Arianna* is one of the loveliest vocal experiences one has had recently, while her singing of the never before recorded *Piangi mio cor* from Weber's *Oberon* also shows her as a consummate stylist. The similarity between this voice and that of Rosa Ponselle, already noted in these columns, is never more apparent than in this *Oberon* aria.

The soprano's singing of *Porgi amor* from *Nozze di Figaro* is a further claim in support of her being a serious and lovely vocalist. Recording is clear and lifelike.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

VOCAL



In the "*Csarda*." (Sung in Hungarian). Alexander Sved (baritone) with Charles Benci and his Gypsy Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set S-47. \$3.75.

Alexander Sved is probably the outstanding Hungarian baritone of the day. He has had a very successful operatic career in Europe, and has added to

this with appearances at our own Metropolitan in such operas as *Tosca*, *Ballo in Maschera*, *Aida*, *Lohengrin* and *Tannhauser*.

This little album represents Mr. Sved's American recording debut, though he has made a number of distinguished operatic records abroad. The album contains twelve Hungarian Gypsy Folk Songs. Being Hungarian, an undisputed authenticity is attached to the singer's interpretations, a fact which is aided and abetted by an Hungarian Gypsy Orchestra under Charles Beni, which furnishes the accompaniment.

Despite the fine quality of Mr. Sved's voice and the authority of his singing, the album cannot escape a certain monotony. You will hardly want to play all of these songs at one sitting. The mood, the musical phrase and the cadences are all in the *csardas* manner. Recording is excellent. D.

Brigadoon. Members of original cast with Brigadoon chorus and orchestra conducted by Franz Allers. 5-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-178. \$4.75.

Last month when we reviewed the none too satisfactory Rainbow recording of selections from the smash hit "*Brigadoon*," we suggested that one of the major companies would very likely bring out a more satisfactory version. Here it is. RCA Victor has released the present recording made by members of the original cast—David Brooks, Marion Bell, Pamela Britton, Lee Sullivan and the Brigadoon Chorus and Orchestra. It is a grand job; one can hardly imagine a better one. All of the top tunes are included and the story of the interesting plot is nicely told on the inside covers of the album.

The selections are: *Once in the Highlands*; *Brigadoon*; *Down on MacConnachy Square*; *Waitin' for my Dearie*; *I'll Go Home with Bonnie Jean*; *The Heather on the Hill*; *Come to Me*; *Almost Like Being in Love*; *There But For You Go I*; *My Mother's Wedding Day*; and *From This Day On*.

Finian's Rainbow—Selections. Ella Logan and members of original cast, with Lyn Murray Singers and orchestra conducted by Ray Charles. 6-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-686. \$5.50.

Columbia has achieved one of the most successful recordings of a musical play in its album of the New York smash hit "*Finian's Rainbow*." Ella Logan heads the original cast, which includes Donald Richards, David Wayne and the Lyn Murray Singers, and all are under the brilliant direction of Ray Charles. It's a great recording, and for those who have enjoyed the show, it is almost a "must." For those who have not been so fortunate, it will surely be enjoyable, and will whet their appetite for it when the road company reaches their city.

It has been superbly recorded, and a nice booklet containing the words of each song is included with the album. The Overture and eleven vocal selections make up the recorded version.

Weill: Street Scene—Excerpts. Members of the original company, with chorus and orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-683. \$7.

In this recording of *Street Scene* we have a highly successful recorded version of what may well be termed an American folk opera—Langston Hughes' words and Elmer Rice's book are as American as they can be, and Kurt Weill, during the dozen years that he has been in this country, has caught the spirit of things on this side of the ocean, and his music fits the plot like a glove. Of course, it was necessary to compress the play to bring it within the scope of an average album of records, but this was most skillfully done. In doing it, the fact that many persons would listen to *Street Scene* on records who had not seen the show, was considered and so it was arranged that the story might be easily followed. The various musical forms—songs, arias, duets, ensembles, orchestral interludes—are tied together with dialogue, which in *Street Scene* takes the place of recitatives in classic opera. After listening to these discs, anyone, whether he has attended an actual performance or not, should have a very good idea of this unique musical play which is just closing a very successful run on Broadway.

Members of the original cast, featuring Anne Jeffreys, Brian Sullivan and Polyna Stoska, have been engaged for this recording, which was directed by Maurice Abravanel, who conducts the play on Broadway. Thus we have a smooth running performance on these discs—one that merits high praise, indeed. The reproduction throughout is excellent.

Romberg: Blossom Time—Selections. Mary Martha Briney (soprano), Blanka Peric (mezzo-soprano), Donald Dame (tenor), Earl Wrightson (baritone), with chorus and orchestra conducted by Al Goodman. 5-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-173. \$4.75.

"Blossom Time," the musical play based on the life of Franz Schubert, seems to gain in popularity as time goes on. Road companies, year after year, are successful wherever they appear. Therefore, this fine album of selections should enjoy a wide sale. The soloists are excellent and the chorus and orchestra under the spirited direction of Al Goodman make for a highly satisfactory ensemble. Fine reproduction is an added feature.

MacGimsey: To My Mother. One side, and **MacGimsey: Sweet Little Jesus Boy.** Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1303). 75c.

RCA Victor issued this disc just in time for Mother's Day. Robert Merrill sings both selections very nicely and is sympathetically supported by Russ Case and his Orchestra. An appropriate gift for mother on her birthday, as well as for Mother's Day.

PIANO



Copland: Danzon Cubaño. Aaron Copland and Leo Smit (pianos). 1-12" disc in envelope. Concert Hall Society AL. \$2.50.

Concert Hall Society continues with its releases of interesting items that will not be found in the present record catalogs. This month we have Aaron Copland's *Danzon Cubaño* which is scored for two pianos, and played on this disc with authority and gay spirit by the composer and his distinguished young disciple, Leo Smit. If this modern selection in the Cuban mood holds anything for you, certainly this performance should reveal it.

In order that we may know something of the background of this work, Mr. Copland has supplied the following note:

"I've been in Cuba on four or five occasions . . . Ever since my first trip I have been fascinated by native Cuban music. For melodic invention and rhythmic intricacy it beats any music I know of in the popular idiom. During my trips I spent my evenings divided between a 10-cent-a-dance ballroom called 'Havana-Sport' and the miniature Coney Island popularly known as 'Las Fritas' (The Hot-Dogs). The themes in the *Danzon* are fragments remembered in retrospect, mostly from these two spots. The beginning of side 2 of the record, for instance, was originally an accompaniment figure that I heard from a raspy bass player. The theme which follows I heard being played by a circus band outside the local Hippodrome . . ."

This recording has been faithfully accomplished, and the record is made of a non-breakable plastic with perfectly silent surfaces.

Beethoven: Polonaise in C major, Op. 89. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Scherzo a Capriccio in F sharp minor.** Edward Kilenyi (piano). 1-12" disc (C-71968D). \$1.

The Beethoven *Polonaise in C major, Op. 89* is of particular interest because, as far as we can find, it is a first recording of this work, about which Thayer has an interesting story to tell.

It appears that: "In a conversation with Beethoven one day, in the time of the Congress, Bertolini suggested to him that, as polonaises were then so much in vogue, he should compose one and dedicate it to the Empress of Russia; for, perhaps, thereby he might also obtain some acknowledgment from Emperor Alexander for the dedication to him of the Violin Sonatas, Op. 30—for none had ever been made. As usual, Beethoven at first scorned dictation, but at length thought better of the proposal, sat down to the pianoforte, improvised various themes and requested Bertolini to choose one; which he did. When it was completed, they waited upon Walkonski, to seek through him permission to make the proposed dedi-

cation, which was granted. At the appointed time Beethoven was admitted to an audience with the Empress and presented the Polonaise, for which he received a present of 50 ducats. On this occasion he was asked if he had ever received anything from the Czar? As he had not, a hundred ducats was added for the Sonatas." And so we suppose that Beethoven went home in high good humor.

Both selections on this disc are nicely played by Kilenyi and well recorded by Columbia. All collectors of Beethoven recordings will very likely be keenly interested in this record.

Rachmaninoff: Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2. One side, and **Paderewski: Minuet in G, Op. 14, No. 1.** José Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9514). \$1.

Two of the most popular pieces for the piano on one disc; dramatically played for the delight of the general music loving public. It should be a terrific seller, and probably will be.

Brahms: Waltzes, Op. 39—Nos. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (pianos). 1-10" disc (C-17407D). 75c.

This disc contains five of the sixteen little waltzes that Brahms wrote for pianoforte (4 hands) which make up Opus 39. They make delightful music for such artists as Vronsky and Babin as the present record demonstrates. They have been splendidly recorded by Columbia.

Joseph Lhevinne Memorial Album, Vol. I. Joseph Lhevinne (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 774. \$3.35.

Chopin: Nocturne in B, Op. 9, No. 3. One side, and **Liszt: Liebestraum.** (DI-4021).

Chopin: Etude in E flat, Op. 10, No. 11 and Etude in G flat, Op. 25, No. 9. One side, and **Liszt—arr. Busoni: La Campanella.** (DI-4022).

These recordings are none too good from a reproduction standpoint, but we presume that some of the many admirers of the late Joseph Lhevinne will wish to add them to their collections.

Chopin Waltzes. Jacques Abram (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 76. \$3.85.

There have been repeated calls for recordings by Jacques Abram, who before he went into the Army in 1942 made successful appearances with the Philadelphia, New York Philharmonic-Symphony, the NBC, St. Louis, and Chicago Symphony Orchestras, and who upon his return in 1946 gave one of the outstanding recitals of the year at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Abram is certainly one of our most talented young pianists as these records will amply demonstrate. The piano reproduction achieved by Musi-

craft is excellent and the record surfaces are satisfactorily quiet.

The Chopin selections that Mr. Abram has chosen for this album are: *Waltz in A flat, Op. 34, No. 1*; *Waltz in A minor, Op. 34, No. 2*; *Waltz in F major, Op. 34, No. 3*; *Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2*; *Waltz in E flat, Op. 18*; *Waltz in A flat, Op. 64, No. 3*; and *Waltz in D flat, Op. 64, No. 1*.

VIOLIN



Bach: Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin, No. 3 in A minor (Sonata No. 2). Ruggiero Ricci (violin). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 187. \$4.85.

Strictly speaking Bach's six sonatas for unaccompanied violin are three sonatas and three partitas arranged alternately. Thus No. 1 is Sonata No. 1; No. 2 is Partita No. 1; and No. 3 is Sonata No. 2, etc. We make this note so that the above heading will be understood.

After listening to this recording, we were so enthusiastic that we just wanted to throw superlatives all over the studio. In the first place the reproduction is marvelous and the records are made of a very smooth non-breakable material. AND in the second place, of greater importance, Ruggiero Ricci gives one of the finest performances that we have ever heard on records. In our opinion, he rates with the very best of the violinists, including our prime favorite, Heifetz. His silken tone is superb and his technique is beyond description.

It might seem to the uninitiated, that four recordings of unaccompanied violin playing would be monotonous, but you will find that it is quite to the contrary. The soloist supplies his own accompaniment by the use of double stops. Bach planned it that way; any accompaniment would be superfluous if not impossible.

The discerning will find this album a worthy addition to any record library. R.

Achron: Hebrew Melody, Op. 33. One side, and **Schubert—trans. Friedberg: Rondo.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-12" disc (V-11-9572). \$1.

This is one of the finest records that Heifetz has made. Both selections exemplify this great artist's rare technique and the marvelous tone that he seems to produce so easily. For lovers of violin recordings, this disc is a "must."

Kreisler: Rondino on a Theme by Beethoven. One side, and **Gluck—arr. Kreisler: Orpheus—Melodie.** Nathan Milstein (violin) with piano accompaniment by Artur Balsam. 1-10" disc (C-17408D). 75c.

Two haunting melodies beautifully played by one of our favorite violinists and nicely recorded by Columbia.

CHILDREN



How to Play Baseball. Joe E. Brown (narrator) with cast and Porter W. Heaps (organ). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set Y-351. \$4.50.

The young heroes of the sand-lots should go for this album in a big way. Joe E. Brown, in addition to being a great comedian, is also an authority on the national game. He gives a lot of good advice to young players, and his lessons are illustrated on several pages of pictures that are included in this album. Joe has a humorous way of putting over his points that the young hopefuls should just lap up.

The Nutcracker Suite for Children. Milton Cross (narrator) with Lucy Brown and Norma Dolin (pianists). 3-10" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 74. \$3.

Every so often a set of children's records is released that deserves more than passing notice. This Musicraft set is one of them. Milton Cross tells the fascinating story of the Nutcracker doll in his inimitable style and the famous Tchaikovsky music supports the narration beautifully played on two pianos by the able artists, Lucy Brown and Norma Dolin. The children can easily understand Mr. Cross' every word and follow the lovely story with its sparkling musical background. The reproduction is of the best and the record surfaces quite smooth.

Here is a set that we can recommend for the children without reservations.

MISCELLANEOUS



Mozart: Adagio and Rondo, K. 617. E. Power Biggs (celeste), Philip Kaplan (flute), Louis Speyer (oboe), Emil Kornsand (viola), and Josef Zimmler (violinello). 1-12" disc (V-11-9570). \$1.

Mozart wrote this charming little work for a blind musician, Marianna Kirchgessner. Miss Kirchgessner was a celebrated performer on the harmonica (an instrument more popularly known in England as musical glasses), who visited Vienna in 1791 and interested Mozart in her instrument. In this recording, a celeste is substituted for the harmonica—perhaps Mr. Biggs does not play the harmonica or perhaps such an old-fashioned instrument was not presently available. Be that as it may, this disc contains some most delightful music. The bell-like tones of the celeste should be mighty attractive to children. Here is an opportunity to introduce some really fine music to the little ones.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Music Comes to America (Revised Edition). By David Ewen. 295 pp. Allen, Towne and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

With Strings Attached: Reminiscences and Reflections. By Joseph Szigeti. Illustrated. 341+xvii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost., C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polyder, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

- - -

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 5

JULY 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

IN the long history of the record business, only occasionally does a humorous recording appear that sweeps the country. So few have appeared that we oldsters can remember most of them—"Uncle Josh Puts Up the Kitchen Stove," "Cohen on the Telephone," "The Laughing Record," "The Two Black Crows," "The Lion and Albert." There are a few more perhaps but not many of them. It seems a very difficult thing to make a good humorous record.

The other day, seven albums of humorous records came to the studio in one shipment. The top-flight comedians of the stage, screen, and radio, each with recordings that they believe best present their various comic talents—Eddie Cantor, Edgar Bergen, Burns and Allen, Jack Benny, Amos 'n' Andy, Fibber McGee and Molly, and Ed "Archie" Gardner. Certainly no one package ever contained so much comedy in recorded form. Surely more comedy than any one person could digest at one sitting. We sampled a little of each and found that these comedians were putting their best gags forward, fully realizing that posterity could gage their ability by these recordings.

These albums are now available to the public, and we are wondering if out of the whole lot, any of them will attain the fame of the comic records we mentioned in our first paragraph. Perhaps one or two of them will. They certainly should, because every one of them contains a lot of laughs. They are all clean fun and it is only clean fun that will live and gain any wide popularity. We thought that some of our readers might be interested in these albums of humorous recordings and so we are listing them for their information.

Amos 'n' Andy. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 1. \$4.50.

Jack Benny. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 2. \$4.50.

Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 3. \$4.50.

George Burns and Gracie Allen. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 4. \$4.50.

Eddie Cantor. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 5. \$4.50.

Ed "Archie" Gardner. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 6. \$4.50.

Fibber McGee and Molly. 4-10" discs in album. Top Ten Set No. 7. \$4.50.

* * *

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Refreshing and rather unusual is the approach of Moses Smith as biographer to his subject. We can recall the worthless drivel which Paul Stefan wrote called *Toscanini*, in which he used the worshipful approach to his subject. After all, no mortal is perfect. We feel that Moses Smith, in his revealing biography of Koussevitzky, is well aware of the man's musical stature. However, any complete and properly balanced biography of Koussevitzky would necessarily have to devote adequate space to a summing up of his activities prior to his becoming conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. As Koussevitzky was fifty years old when he became conductor of that renowned orchestra, the period before his appointment in Boston covers the greater part of his life.

Moses Smith leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that Koussevitzky was not properly prepared for the great task of conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. But the important thing is this: Koussevitzky, by virtue of his high

ideals, set for himself a high level of perfection to be achieved, and then went ahead and accomplished this tremendous task. He had seemingly insurmountable obstacles, but he unquestionably overcame them, mastered every difficulty and has emerged completely victorious. No reader of this intensely interesting book can fail to receive this message.

Koussevitzky filed a \$500,000 suit for libel against Moses Smith when the book was published, but the court subsequently dismissed the action. We cannot see where his reputation should be damaged, for he has achieved the most enviable reputation of any conductor alive—nearly a quarter of a century with the Boston Orchestra. The results are undeniable, the the Boston Orchestra speaks eloquently for his gifts. It is the fifty years of Koussevitzky's background that makes this book so interesting.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of *excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9, Op. 70. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-688. \$5.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9, Op. 70. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1134. \$3.85.

It may come as a surprise to many of our readers when we say that after repeated hearings and careful comparisons, we go on record as preferring the Kurtz recording of this work. Many music lovers are, at last, happily beginning to realize that there are a great many excellent conductors before the public, and indeed their public is a large one, what with

radio and recordings. It is hardly surprising that often the paragons like Toscanini and Koussevitzky find their recordings excelled by a Fistoulari, or a Kurtz, who are also first rank conductors.

While the Columbia set contains an extra record, it may be worth the difference for the serious minded soul who prefers fewer cuts in his symphonies. True Columbia has recorded only one inch on the second side (a net loss of about thirty cents!), however, it provides the best spacing and breaks. Also Columbia's set is noticeably superior reproduction and quieter surfaces.

We found Kurtz more reliable in his tempi than Koussevitzky, particularly in the first and last (fifth) movements. Several tricky changes in metre occur in the final movement which Kurtz handles with a firm and sure hand.

Both albums supply copious program notes; we will not discuss the background of the music. As for its appeal, anyone who has not heard it should do so if he has any leaning toward Shostakovich. It is not as significant a work as the *First*, *Fifth*, and *Sixth Symphonies*; but it's quite an improvement over the *Seventh* and *Eighth* in our opinion. Our first impression was rather cool; but repeated hearings have warmed us up quite a bit. At this point, only the long second movement makes us squirm a bit. Your experience may be the same as ours: after you hear it through several times comparing the two versions, you suddenly find you like the work! S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1124. \$3.85.

The *Fourth* falls easily on the ear; it is a lovely and enjoyable work. It remains the best of Schumann's uneven symphonic works, in spite of some fine moments in his *Third* ("Rhenish") *Symphony*, notably, the last movement. The *Fourth* hangs together very well, largely because of the use of some thematic material in common to the four movements.

Goossens' reading of this work is that rare and pleasing combination of bright, crisp, and clean playing with an easy, flowing, almost relaxed atmosphere. A clean performance usually has a certain tautness; but this reading appealed to us for its fine proportions and warm feeling. It will be noticed that Goossens' reading is to a degree straightforward, he does not inflate any of the music's values, nor throw the work out of focus by expanding, accelerating, and the usual devices. It all boils down, in our opinion, to a finely fashioned performance, just in values and appropriate. The reproduction is well accomplished, being big and resonant yet very clear.

It is a regrettable fact that Goossens is leaving our country. We lose a man of enviable musicianship, as his several recorded contributions will attest. His enterprising programs at the Cincinnati May Festivals

are among the brightest pages of the history of musical performances in America. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1105. \$6.85.

This is the first new recording of the *Pathétique* for quite some time. Recording companies may well be discouraged from trying to issue a *Pathétique* to compare to, let alone excel, the one by Furtwangler and the Berlin Philharmonic (VM-553) which has just been reinstated in the Victor catalog.

Stokowski was in good form when he appeared before the microphones for this job. To be sure, there are many unusual slants on the work, many typically Stokowskian phrases; but every one of them is carried off beautifully and with fine effect. His climax in the fourth movement is handled magnificently and the quality of tone produced in the first movement is lovely indeed. While the tempo is leisurely and never rushed, there is surprisingly less wringing of pathos than one would expect. Stokowski's conception of the work is a valid one, and his well-known capacity for projecting it is ever in evidence. We are pleased to report that we thoroughly enjoyed hearing this recording, which is also an excellent reproduction.

Having to name a choice of the best recorded *Pathétique* we feel that our back is to the wall. We would say Furtwangler, by a small margin, next this fine set by Stokowski. Rodzinski or Ormandy are for those who want a more conventional reading. The rest of them dropped out somewhere along the line. We would mention the present set by Stokowski is superior to the one he recorded with the All American Orchestra. S.

A Program of Music by César Franck. Psyché. Four sides and *Le Chasseur Maudit*. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1122. \$4.85.

Not the least of the virtues of this album is that it may be played on an automatic phonograph so that each of the works is unbroken, as each takes four sides. That is doubly important for most persons will not play these works together, but rather each one will become part of a "program" of recorded music. Its more intrinsic virtues also include good performances and recording. Furthermore, these are the first domestic recordings of both the symphonic poems.

In its original form, *Psyché* was a symphony for orchestra and chorus in six movements; in 1900 it was published as an orchestral suite in four movements. It seems customary to perform only three of these four movements, which is what we have recorded here. The three movements are titled *Psyché's Sleep*, *Psyché Borne Away by the Zephyrs*, and *Psyché and Eros*.

Le Chasseur maudit was recently issued by Decca in an *ffrr* recording made in England. Their translation is "The Accursed Huntsman" while Hall's notes to the present set call it "The Mad Huntsman." Regardless, mad or accursed, the huntsman was in a bad way—having committed sacrilege against God, he has been condemned to ride the night skies with his retainers for all eternity.

While these tone poems are not among the pearls of the symphonic repertoire, they make enjoyable listening for those whose tastes embrace the full blown romantic era of music. Defauw is well equipped in style and sincerity to provide sterling performances of Franck's colorful symphonic poems. S.

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloe—Suite No. 1 (Nocturne and Danse guerrière). Two sides, and **Ravel: Daphnis et Chloe—Suite No. 2.** Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-29. \$7.

There are several notable things which make this an exciting release. For one thing, a modern recording of the Suite No. 1 was badly needed and in surprisingly great demand. Then we have a fine set by Charles Münch who was so warmly received in New York this past season for his admirable conducting of the Philharmonic. We also have the distinguished Paris Conservatory Orchestra back on records. And finally and at last—what we have been waiting for—Decca *ffrr* records of standard size. Decca is now importing only records of standard size, and soon all their past releases will be available that way. They play on any changer that takes a regular domestic disc.

As will be noted in the heading above, the Interlude, or second section, of the First Suite is omitted. This was originally a brief episode for unaccompanied wordless choir, placed between the scene of the nymphs' comforting Daphnis and calling upon Pan (nocturne), and the scene in the pirates' lair (Danse guerrière). Münch does extremely well by this fanciful music, and meets no competition on records except from Koussevitzky in the Second Suite (Victor SP-1). Those who wish a more complete version of the music from *Daphnis and Chloe* will not suffer any great loss by selecting the present set, and they gain by having the whole thing in automatic sequence. This set sounds well played straight through—first and second suites. We recommend it highly, and gladly welcome English Deccas in conventional size. S.

Handel—arr. Ormandy: Water Music Suite. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-279. \$3.

We fervently hope this recording will not replace the Hamilton Harty one in the Columbia catalog (X-13); if it does, it will be another example of an

inferior newer recording replacing a superior older one. Columbia will do well to retain the admirable Harty X-13 set for those who wish to hear one of the best recorded performances that ever graced the Columbia catalog. Incidentally, the reproduction of X-13 is bright and full even today—it sounds very good indeed, and Harty's orchestra makes fewer technical mistakes than the renowned Philadelphians.

Ormandy's "arrangement" of the usual six movements that are customarily included in the *Water Music* (it originally contained twenty sections) seems to consist of a few arbitrary changes in scoring which in every instance fall short of Harty's scoring. Ormandy also plays the movements in a different order, and repeats the entire opening *Allegro* as the third movement. The program notes in the album state that the opening *Allegro* "makes a brief reappearance" but actually it is repeated in its entirety, and is correctly labelled as an additional movement.

From the opening bar to the conclusion, a side by side comparison of Ormandy and Harty will give Harty a clean cut victory for the brilliance, sparkle, buoyancy, and general spirit of his conception. Try it for yourself and be amazed. The reproduction of the new Ormandy set is satisfactory but not outstanding; our surfaces were very good. The *Water Music* being one of our half dozen prime favorites, the above remarks represent an honest and unbiased opinion; however, many casual listeners may easily be satisfied with the Ormandy set. They will hear no severe malice done to the music, and they will not hear a distinguished performance. S.

Bernstein: Fancy Free. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-406. \$3.75.

"Fancy Free," in which Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein collaborated, was given its first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House by Ballet Theatre on April 18, 1944. This ballet was used as the basis for the lavish and lively New York musical comedy success, "On the Town."

"Fancy Free" was Leonard Bernstein's first theatrical work and was one of the things that brought this unique musician to the attention of the metropolitan public. Since that time, only a few short years ago, he has gone far, as all persons interested in the American musical scene so well know.

While this ballet is not a masterpiece, it is interesting through its strict use of jazz material in symphonic forms. On these discs it receives a spirited performance under the direction of its composer. Decca supplies with this album a booklet fully describing the action and the plot. With this in hand it is an easy matter to sit back and imagine what is supposed to be going on as the music comes from one's phonograph.

This album should supply a half-hour of lively meaningful music in the jazz idiom. In this recording Billie Holiday supplies the vocal prologue.

Purcell: Abdelazer Suite. Vox Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 199. \$3.75.

Henry Purcell, England's towering composer, wrote the accompanying music to a 1695 revival of the play "Abdelazer" or "The Moor's Revenge" by the authoress Afra Behn. Fendler has resurrected this score and edited it. The editing was in itself quite a task, for the original score contained no dynamic markings—notes only were on the paper, in addition to which he had to compose a part for the harpsichord. In Purcell's day the harpsichord part was improvised. Fendler, as well as being a fine conductor, is also a musicologist and specialist in the works of pre-Romantic masters. He therefore brings a sincerity to this work which is reflected in the sterling performance, and the strings of the Vox Chamber Orchestra play with style and finish. The *Abdelazer Suite* contains the following movements: Overture, Rondeau, Minuet, Jig, Hornpipe, and four Airs. A distinguished and previously unrecorded work. The reproduction is good, surfaces noisy. S.

Bach: Suite No. 2 in B minor. Five sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky; Georges Laurent (solo flute). 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1123. \$5.85.

In view of the fact that there is no particularly satisfactory recording of either of these suites, the present album is most welcome. We predict that it will have a very wide appeal to discerning music lovers, both those who are lovers of Bach and also those who feel that that great composer is a little beyond them. Certainly these suites should not be beyond anyone who has within himself the love of the fine and beautiful. Incidentally, they contain the very finest examples of 18th century dance music. *Suite No. 3* contains the famous *Air*, often referred to as the *Air on the G string*.

These recordings were made in the Tanglewood Concert Theatre at the conclusion of the Berkshire Festival last year, and, in our opinion, they are among the finest that Koussevitzky has ever produced.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F. George Eskdale (trumpet), Arthur Cleghorn (flute), Frederick Grinke (violin), Evelyn Rothwell (oboe), and the Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-27. \$5.

Last month RCA Victor issued a recording of this work by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky. It was contained in album M-1118 together with the *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*. While the present set has the benefit of English Decca *ffrr* recording, and Boyd Neel has a great reputation for his Bach recordings, it is rather our opinion that most American music lovers will prefer the Koussevitzky rendition.

Both recordings should be readily available so that those interested may make their own choice.

These English Decca records are standard size so that they may be played on any automatic phonograph. We understand that all Decca records received from England from this date on will be made the proper size for playing on any American changer. This is good news indeed, for these *fff* recordings are surely wonderful reproductions.

Verdi: Nabucco—Overture. E.I.A.R. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sergio Failoni. 1-12" disc Cetra BB-25011). \$3.09.

If you are one of those music lovers who is making a collection of operatic overtures, you'll be glad to know that an especially fine recording of the overture to Verdi's seldom-heard opera *Nabucco* has recently arrived from Italy.

This recording is well up to the high standard that Cetra has established for itself.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64—Themes from the Second Movement. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9574). \$1.

This adaptation from the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony is featured in the current film "Carnegie Hall." Stokowski gives it a thrilling performance, and those who have not seen the picture, as well as those who have, will certainly find it an interesting orchestral disc. It has been splendidly recorded.

Millöcker: The Dubarry—Selections. New Light Symphony Orchestra conducted by Willi Lachner. 1-12" disc (V-C-2410). \$1.90.

Norton: Chu Chin Chow—Selections. London Palladium Orchestra conducted by Richard Crean. 1-12" disc (V-C-2562). \$1.90.

Two orchestral medleys from musical plays that were popular a score or more years ago. Nicely played and well recorded. They will probably bring back pleasant memories to the oldsters.

Brahms—trans. Stokowski: *Hungarian Dance No. 1 in G minor*. One side, and Dolan: *A Message for Liza* (from "Lady in the Dark"). Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-10" disc (V-10-1302). 75c.

This disc certainly won't increase Mr. Stokowski's musical prestige, in fact, we would think that it would have just the opposite effect. In the *Lady in the Dark* selection he attempts to out-Kostelanetz Kostelanetz, with, in our opinion, pretty sad results. In the Brahms familiar *Hungarian Dance No. 1* he is a bit more successful in imitating the Boston "Pops." Royalties rather than the artistic were probably in his mind when he made this one.

Strauss, Josef: Music of the Spheres—Waltz, Op. 235. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (C-12579D). \$1.

If you like Viennese waltz music, you'll probably like this disc. The selection, which is not too well known, is artistically played by the Cleveland Orchestra under the spirited direction of Erich Leinsdorf. Reproduction—excellent.

CONCERTO



Wieniawski: Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22. Isaac Stern (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-656. \$4.

The Polish violin virtuoso, Henri Wieniawski, is among those nineteenth century composers who experimented in new orchestral colors and effects, foreshadowed by such original thinkers as Hector Berlioz.

Wieniawski, who was born in Lublin, Poland, on July 10, 1835, like many another musician of the period, started his career as a child prodigy, touring both Russia and his native Poland. After further study he embarked on an important European tour with his pianist brother, Joseph. The violinist's career as both virtuoso and teacher was marred by ill health, and finally he died, after a breakdown on the concert platform in Berlin, in 1880, at the age of 44.

The *Concerto No. 2 for Violin and Orchestra* is his most representative work—richly scored, melodious and alive with thematic originality. It is still a prime favorite with present-day violinists.

Tschaikovsky had a particular regard for Wieniawski. In 1880 he wrote as follows to Mme. von Meck: "Your benevolence to poor dying Wieniawski touches me deeply . . . I pity him greatly. In him we shall lose an incomparable violinist and a gifted composer. In this respect, I think Wieniawski very talented . . . parts of the D Minor Concerto show a true creative gift."

This well recorded album offers Isaac Stern as soloist, and Efrem Kurtz and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. The impression is of a happy union. Mr. Stern's tone and technique are first-class, and he performs with a sympathy for his task which is quite obvious. Surfaces are much better than Columbia's surfaces have been in the past.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Ida Haendel (violin) with The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Seven sides, and Mendelssohn: *Midsummer Night's Dream*—Wedding March. The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-23. \$9.

We cannot recall having heard a concerto or radio

performance of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto for a long, long time played with the poetry of Miss Haendel. And we certainly cannot recall any of our contemporary virtuosi recently playing the final movement at the logical and comfortable tempo Miss Haendel employs. We get rather tired of every violinist racing that last movement, evidently trying to play it faster than Heifetz. We never felt that Miss Haendel dragged a measure of this lovely music. The whole thing is played with great simplicity and feeling—a rare and difficult combination. Her tone is not large, but it is sweet and pure. We found this performance refreshing and charming. The reproduction and surfaces are fine *ffrr* quality, and the filler, Mendelssohn's Wedding March is well wrought by Fistoulari.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Handel: Twelve Concerti Grossi, Op. 6. Busch Chamber Players conducted by Adolf Busch (concertino: Adolf Busch and Ernest Drucker, violins; Hermann Busch, violoncello; Mieczyslaw Horszowski, clavier). Forty-nine sides, and **Geminiani: Sonata in C minor for Violin and Cembalo—Siciliana.** Adolf Busch (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 25-12" discs in three albums, with booklet. Columbia Set M-685. \$28.50.

This is truly a monumental recording! One that will live long in the repertory of recorded music, and one that will be referred to by discerning music lovers through the years to come. Columbia may take just pride in issuing it, for it is a great altruistic accomplishment. No pains or expense have been spared in its production. The special booklet analyzing each concerto, which was prepared by the eminent musicologist, Dr. Emanuel Winternitz of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is one of the finest things of its kind that we have ever seen. It is intensely interesting and fully illuminating. The selection of Adolf Busch, one of the greatest interpreters of the music of Handel, to direct this work, was indeed an excellent choice. It insured an authoritative and highly artistic performance. The recorders used particular care to see that most faithful reproduction was achieved. Thus we have a recording that calls for the highest praise, and one that we can recommend without reservations of any kind.

The keynote of Handel's *Twelve Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6 is variety. Handel never seems to run out of ideas. These works are full of surprises. Everywhere we find fascinating melodies, unique rhythmical patterns, and unusual thematic material. Dance movements of various kinds abound—sarabandes, allemandes, minuets, gigue, sicilianos, polonaises and hornpipes.

One of the remarkable facts about these twelve pieces is that they were all composed within the short period of one month. They were first performed at

a concert in London with the composer conducting from the harpsichord. It is reported that they were generously applauded, and it is no wonder, for they contain much tuneful music that was written to be enjoyed. Such music can be pleasing to present-day audiences if they are given the opportunity of hearing it. This is especially true if such superb performances as we find on these records are available.

Our hope is that the present recording will be greeted with sufficient demand to warrant Columbia's providing other such worthy works in recorded form.

R.



OPERA

Puccini: La Boheme—Quartet (Act III). Pia Tassinari (soprano), M. Huder (mezzo-soprano), Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor), Enzo Mascherini (baritone), with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25121). \$3.09.

Verdi: Nabucco—Va pensiero. One side, and **Verdi: I Lombardi—O Signor che dal tetto natio.** E.I.A.R. Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25077). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Ensemble recordings by Cetra offer the quartet: *Addio dolce svegliare* from *La Boheme*, sung by Pia Tassinari, Maria Huder, Ferruccio Tagliavini and Enzo Mascherini, as well as choruses from Verdi's *Nabucco* and *I Lombardi all Prima Crociata* by chorus and orchestra of the E.I.A.R., under the direction of the distinguished Gino Marinuzzi.

The Puccini excerpts is admirably sung and recorded. In fact, it is one of the best of many such recordings of this famous passage initiated in 1905 by Fonotopia's pioneer undertaking with Adelina Stehle, Maria Camporelli, Edoardo Garbin and Mario Sammarco.

In the performance under discussion, Pia Tassinari has an ideal Mimi voice, while Tagliavini (her husband in real life) compliments her lyric tones with some of the best singing he has yet put on discs. Maria Huder (known up until now merely by her Kate Pinkerton in Victor's complete *Madama Butterfly*) shows what her brilliant soprano voice can do when given a chance. She is an excellent Musetta. Her *vis-a-vis* is Enzo Mascherini, now fairly well-known to New York and Philadelphia operagoers.

The singers take the music at a very deliberate tempo. Certainly, a drill-master such as Toscanini would in all probability not approve of some of the long "holds." However, such a conception as this is in no way out of keeping with Puccini's intentions or the spirit of his music.

The two choral excerpts are decidedly unhackneyed material. *Nabucco* was Verdi's third opera and his

first real success. It was produced at La Scala in 1842. *I Lombardi* followed in 1843. Both choruses are typical of their period. Pianissimo passages, punctuated by fortissimo chords are much in evidence and the music is naive, tuneful and fairly unexciting to modern ears. However, to collectors interested in music of the early Verdi operas these selections should be a real boon. Furthermore they are excellently conducted and recorded. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Aurette a cui si spesso. One side, and **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Sola ne' miei prim'anni. Pia Tassinari (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25120). \$3.09.

Mozart: Nozze di Figaro—Deh vieni non tardar. One side, and **Massenet: Werther**—M'ha scritto che m'ama. Pia Tassinari (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25122). \$3.09.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Son pochi fiori. One side, and **Puccini: La Bohème**—Donde lieta uscì. Pia Tassinari (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. LaRosa Parodi and Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25143). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Three-pocket Tassinari souvenir album to hold the above records available, \$1.

When Pia Tassinari recently sang Mimi in *La Bohème* in Newark, Frances Alda and Lucrezia Bori both traveled from New York to hear her. The verdict of these two famous Mimis of an earlier day was, "A great artist."

Listening to this Cetra album of operatic arias by Mme. Tassinari, one heartily endorses the dictum of these two celebrated ladies.

Of all the singers whose records have come out of Italy recently, this soprano is the most pleasing both vocally and as a musical personality. Her lyric tones are admirably used and her diction is clear and refined. There are echoes of both Bori and Muzio in her sensitive work.

Mme. Tassinari here offers Mimi's *Addio* from *La Bohème* with consummate artistry. Her's must indeed be a touching and artistic impersonation. Two arias from *Lohengrin*, sung in Italian, show that Wagner need not be by any means incompatible with a Latin singer of the first rank. Indeed, it is doubtful if a more haunting account of Elsa's *Song to the Night Breezes* has ever been put on wax. *Elsa's Dream*, on the reverse side, only emphasizes this impression. *Deh vieni non tardar* from *Nozze di Figaro* displays the singer as completely at home in Mozart, while the aria *Son pochi fiori* from Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* is perfection! The *Letter Scene* from Massenet's *Werther*, also sung in Italian, could stand a heavier, meatier voice than this charming singer's, but she manages to give a penetrating account of the poetic

text.

Surfaces are a little rough, but the records improve with repeated playings. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Massenet: Werther—Letter Scene. One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Stella del marinar. Cloe Elmo (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25009). \$3.09.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—Voi lo sapete. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Voi che sapete. Gianna Pederzini (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25036). \$3.09.

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri—Cruda sorte amor tiranno. One side, and **Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri**—Per lui che adoro. Gianna Pederzini (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25092). \$3.09.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera—Morro ma prima in grazia. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Porgi amor. Gabriella Gatti (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. Simonetto and F. Previtali. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25142). \$3.09.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Son pochi fiori. One side, and **Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz**—Non mi resta che il pianto. Pia Tassinari (soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. LaRosa Parodi. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25037). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Two singers new to American record fans emerge from this new group of Cetra Records—mezzo-sopranos Gianna Pederzini and Chloe Elmo. The latter singer, currently rumored engaged by the Metropolitan for the 1947-48 season, sings the often omitted *Stella del Marinar*, Laura's principal aria from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* and the moving passage from Massenet's *Werther*, in which Charlotte is examining her lover's letters. *Stella del Marinar* has not been present in American catalogs since Margarete Ober's lovely 1914 version was dropped by Victor. Mme. Elmo has a rich, vibrant voice which she uses with marked effectiveness. The quality is emotional and the dimensions of the tones obviously impressive.

Mme. Pederzini sounds a little past her prime. Her voice is clear and produced with admirable naturalness, but occasional shortness of breath and unsteadiness are apparent. Despite this, she is a very likeable singer, and her dramatic warmth in the aria from *Cavalleria* offers interesting contrast to her well phrased *Voi che sapete* from *Nozze di Figaro*. The singer seems to understand both Mozart and Mascagni. In two interesting passages from Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Mme. Pederzini shows some stiff-

ness in florid passages, but her style and diction are worth noting.

Gabriella Gatti sings *Morò ma prima in grazia* from Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* with style and understanding. Her velvety tones sound well and she is excellently recorded. On the reverse is an aria from *Nozze di Figaro*, which has already been reviewed in a previous issue of THE NEW RECORDS. Pia Tassinari concludes the list with Suzel's two arias from *L'Amico Fritz*. The singer's aptitude for this role has already been discussed in these columns, but there are many who will be happy to have these arias thus presented on one double-faced disc. Surfaces of all these recordings improve with several playings.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Catalani: La Wally—M'hai salvato. One side, and **Donizetti: Lucrezia Borgia**—Di pescatore ignobile. Paolo Civil (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra CC-2322). \$3.09.

Verdi: Aida—Celeste Aida. One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Cielo e mar. Galliano Masini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25039). \$3.09.

Verdi: Aida—Celeste Aida. One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana**—Addio alla madre (with M. Vinciguerra, soprano). Galliano Masini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25096). \$3.09.

Gounod: Faust—Dio possente. One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia**—Largo al factotum. Enzo Mascherini (baritone) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25123). \$3.09.

Bizet: Carmen—Toreador Song (with chorus). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Credo. Carlo Tagliabue (baritone) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by A. LaRosa Parodi. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25102). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

A group of Cetra records featuring male voices, turns up with some old friends of American opera lovers. Both the tenor Galliano Masini and the baritone Carlo Tagliabue sang at the Metropolitan, while Enzo Mascherini and Paolo Civil have recently appeared with lesser companies in this country.

Mr. Masini is heard in arias from *Aida*, *Gioconda* and *Cavalleria*. His is the type of tenor which makes a good effect in a large opera house. The upper tones are trumpet-like in their clarity and sonority and the singer has a forthright style. There is little real beauty of voice, and because of this lack of tonal sensuousness such an aria as *Cielo e Mar* suffers. The tenor also likes to biff and then hold his high notes; his final high B flat in *Celeste Aida* might be said to have been seized "by the short hairs."

Tagliabue is an excellently schooled baritone, a smooth and able performer. The *Credo* from *Otello* is an authentic piece of singing and extends the fine impression this baritone made at the Metropolitan some years ago in the role of Iago.

Enzo Mascherini is heard in arias from the *Barbiere* and *Faust*. When you compare these records with the Mascherini of the recent City Center revival of *Andrea Chenier*, you realize that the baritone has come a very long way. These examples of his art must have been made when he was still very young. They are thoroughly routine, second-class performances, lacking in technique and authority and in the case of the *Largo al Factotum*, in humor.

Paolo Civil, a resonant but rather unimaginative tenor, adds two arias that have been missing from the operatic catalogs. They fill a gap that needed filling, and are resolutely presented.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Bohème—Mi chiamano Mimi (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Madama Butterfly**—Un bel di, vedremo (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc. (V-11-9599). \$1.

Miss MacDonald's host of admirers will very likely welcome the opportunity of securing this disc which contains two of the most popular arias in the realm of Italian opera. Others will probably prefer renditions by an artist better qualified in that field. There are many in the various catalogs from which to choose.

PIANO



Piano Music of Mendelssohn. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1121. \$3.85.

Variations Sérieuses, Op. 54. Three sides, and *Songs Without Words* (The Shepherd's Complaint, Op. 67, No. 5 and May Breezes, Op. 62, No. 1). (V-11-9562 and V-11-9563).

Horowitz: Mendelssohn's Wedding March and Variations after Liszt. (V-11-9564).

The most interesting item in this album is the *Variations Sérieuses*, which Cortot recorded many years ago. It is one of Mendelssohn's most significant works for piano. Horowitz plays it sympathetically and does not over-elaborate the more brilliant passages. It is a wholly satisfactory performance.

The startling item in this collection is Horowitz's *Mendelssohn's Wedding March and Variations after Liszt*. To us the title seems a gross understatement. This piece is certainly not *after* Liszt, it is out and beyond Liszt. It is the sort of selection that a performer might put on his program to wake up the

person who came to the concert because someone gave him a ticket. The familiar Wedding March tune would attract him and the chime and music box effects would probably tickle his risibilities. It certainly does not belong in the same album with the other pieces.

VIOLONCELLO



Piatigorsky in Russian Melodies. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) with piano accompaniments by Ralph Berkowitz. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-684. \$3.25.

Piatigorsky has chosen six melodies of Russian origin for this attractive album. All of them are suitable for violoncello solos and Piatigorsky's rich singing tone is much in evidence in each selection. For those who like tuneful violoncello music excellently played this album will have a great appeal.

The selections are: Tchaikovsky's *None But the Lonely Heart* and *Chanson Triste*; Rimsky-Korsakov's *Song of India*; Rubinstein's *Melody in F*; Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise*; and Cui's *Orientale*.

VIOLIN



Hindemith: Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin, Op. 31, No. 2. Ruggiero Ricci (violin). Two sides, and **Hindemith: Sonata in E.** Ruggiero Ricci (violin) and Louis Persinger (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 603. \$3.

Those persons who learned of young Mr. Ricci through his recordings of Bach's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin, No. 3 in A minor*, which received such a glowing review last month, will doubtless be interested in this new album. For that reason we must warn them that the present album contains two works in the modern idiom. They are not easy for most persons to appreciate and enjoy. One must make the effort to understand them by repeated playings. Unless one knows Hindemith and likes his works, he certainly should hear these discs before he purchases them.

Both selections are beautifully played and nicely recorded.

Svendsen: Romance for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 26. Carlo Andersen (violin) with the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5232). \$2.50.

Johan Severin Svendsen (1840-1911), after Grieg, was the most important Norwegian composer of the 19th century. He was an able violinist and conductor and made many tours throughout northern Europe where he was always received with a hearty welcome. The present work may be considered quite old-fashioned and it undoubtedly is, but it contains many pleasing little melodies of a truly tranquil character.

Certainly one may delightfully relax under the spell of this charming little piece. It has been beautifully played and splendidly recorded.

Heifetz Plays Modern Violin Transcriptions. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1126. \$3.75.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco: Tango. One side, and **Bax: Mediterranean.** (V-10-1293).

Poulenc: Presto. One side, and **Ravel: Valses Nobles et Sentimentales Nos. 6 and 7.** (V-10-1294).

Debussy: La Chevelure (from "Trois Chansons de Bilitis"). One side, and **Medtner: Fairy Tale.** (V-10-1295).

Rachmaninoff: Etude—Tableau. One side, and **Halftter: Danza de la Gitana.** (V-10-1296).

All the above transcribed by Jascha Heifetz.

The literature of solo violin music is certainly enriched with these eight transcriptions by Heifetz. They are superbly played by the transcriber, who is more than ably supported by the distinguished accompanist, Emanuel Bay. Much might be written about each of these little pieces but space does not permit. Please do not let our brevity retard you, if you are interested in most charming music for solo violin. There is great variety in this little album and marvelous examples of the supreme technique of the outstanding Mr. Heifetz.

VOCAL



Romberg: The Student Prince—Selections. Frances Greer and Mary Martha Briney (sopranos), Donald Dame (tenor), Earl Wrightson (baritone), the Guild Choristers, and Al Goodman and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set P-180. \$3.75.

We can't recall an album for which there has been a greater call than one containing the selections from Romberg's *The Student Prince*. After all these years of waiting, the present highly satisfactory one issued by RCA Victor is now available. Hardly more than an announcement of such an album is necessary, for there certainly is a waiting market. The present album contains the Overture and seven of the most popular selections. The singers are well qualified for their roles and the recording has been nicely accomplished.

Friml: Northwest Outpost—Selections. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-690. \$4.

Columbia promptly releases this timely album containing five songs and the *Russian Easter Hymn*

from Nelson Eddy's new film "Northwest Outpost." The songs are by Rudolf Friml, and the *Russian Eastern Hymn* was arranged by Robert Armbruster for the Easter service sequence, which, by the way, is one of the high points of the picture.

Mr. Eddy's new role is that of a gallant West Pointer who volunteers his services to the governor of a Russian penal colony in California. The action takes place in 1830, Nelson falls in love with a beautiful and mysterious Russian lady—it is all quite exciting. However, Nelson is given plenty of opportunity to sing, which he does, and in most cases he is supported with an adequate chorus. We believe that his host of fans are going to like the picture and we are rather sure that they will also think this album is pretty fine, too. It contains the following songs in addition to the *Russian Easter Hymn: One More Mile to Go; Raindrops on a Drum; Love is the Time; Nearer and Dearer; and Tell Me With Your Eyes.*

Songs of Victor Herbert. Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with male chorus and orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-682. \$4.

Risé Stevens has chosen some of the most popular Victor Herbert selections, and with the aid of a male chorus and an adequate orchestra under the direction of Sylvan Shulman, brings them very much to life. They have all been very nicely recorded.

The selections are: *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life; A Kiss in the Dark; Thine Alone; When You're Away; Kiss Me Again; and Sweethearts.*

Gladys Swarthout Sings. Gladys Swarthout (soprano) with Russ Case and his orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1127. \$3.

Miss Swarthout turns her attention to the songs that are most popular with radio audiences, and with the aid of Russ Case, who supplies very pleasing accompaniments, produces this album.

The selections are: *Falling in Love With Love; You're Everywhere; September Song; The Lovely Song My Heart is Singing; In the Still of the Night; and I'll Remember April*

Ballads. Richard Dyer-Bennet. 3-10" discs in album. Asch-Stinson Set S-364. \$3.

The release of a new album by Richard Dyer-Bennet is always an important event for his many fans. The selections are of course regular Dyer-Bennet fare and he sings them in his usual style, supplying his own interesting guitar accompaniments. For this album Mr. Dyer-Bennet has chosen: *Three Jolly Rogues; Come All Ye; O, No John; The Frog and the Mouse; John Peel; The Eddystone Light; Little Pigs; and Molly Malone.* The words of each song are printed on the inside covers of the album.

Poulenc: Metamorphoses. One side, and **Poulenc: Two Poems by Louis Aragon.** (Sung in French). Pierre Bernac (baritone) with piano accompaniments by Francois Poulenc. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6267). \$2.50.

This disc contains some of the nicest recordings that have come out of France since the war. Of particular interest are the poems of Louis Aragon which Poulenc has set so felicitously to music. These little songs were brought into being while the Germans were in possession of France and prove that highly artistic things can stem from the greatest of tragedies. Three delightful little songs make up the *Metamorphoses* on the reverse side of this disc. All are beautifully sung and the composer supplies most sympathetic accompaniments. For those who are looking for new songs of rare quality this record holds much.

Gounod: Au Rossignol. One side, and **Gounod: Sérénade—Quand tu chantes.** (Sung in French). Pierre Bernac (baritone) with piano accompaniment by Francois Poulenc. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6250). \$2.50.

These two lovely Gounod songs will likely be new to many of our readers, especially *Au Rossignol*. The *Sérénade* is occasionally heard in this country and an excellent recording of it was made a number of years ago by Yvonne Brothier.

The combination of the fine tenor-baritone Pierre Bernac and the distinguished composer and accompanist Francois Poulenc is ideally suited for this music, and for those who appreciate beautiful vocal recordings this disc will hold untold charm. We recall having heard some of the recordings that M. Bernac made for French H.M.V. a decade or so ago and we are glad to report that his excellent voice has not deteriorated in any way. In fact, we seem to note an improvement in his phrasing and the quality of his top notes.

Romantic Songs of Latin America. Nestor Chayres (tenor) with Alfredo Antonini and his Concert Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-507. \$3.75.

Doubtless many of our readers who have heard Nestor Chayres on the radio, where he has been featured on leading programs, or who attended his concert at Town Hall or heard him with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, will be interested in this album of his records. We can hardly think of anyone who is better fitted to sing songs such as the ones he has chosen for this collection. These sentimental melodies of Latin America have an almost universal appeal, and when sung as Chayres sings on these discs, they are worthy of the investigation of all music lovers who are at all interested in music of this character.

Mr. Chayres is splendidly supported by a fine or-

chestra under the very able direction of Alfredo Antonini. The recording has been very nicely accomplished.

Schumann: Dichterliebe, Op. 48. (Sung in German). Aksel Schiøtz (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-6270 to V-DB-6272). \$7.50.

Of the several recordings that have been made of this loveliest of Schumann's song-cycles, this is perhaps the most satisfactory. When it was released in England just about a year ago, it was highly praised by the critics and Compton Mackenzie spoke of it in glowing terms in an editorial in the May 1946 issue of *The Gramophone* (London).

Mr. Schiøtz seems right at home with the various little songs that make up this cycle and gives to each just the proper shading to bring out clearly the meaning of Heine's charming poems. His voice is of considerable range, in fact at times one might think that he was a baritone—his lower tones are particularly warm and beautiful.

There are three distinct things that make up these songs—Heine's poems, the songs themselves and the piano accompaniments. Each is of supreme importance. For a fine performance we must have a singer who is fully in sympathy with the text of the poems and whose diction is clear enough to make their meanings clear to the listener, he must also be able to show through his singing the various moods that Schumann has so artistically created, and lastly we must have an accompanist who can keep the lovely piano parts in proper balance with the voice. This last point should be stressed because we have always thought that Schumann felt that the piano was equally as important as the voice in this work.

In view of the fact that we have all of these elements in the present recording, we have no hesitancy in recommending it most highly. R.

Thomas: Oh! Men from the Fields. One side, and **Hook: Bright Phoebus.** Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-10" disc (V-10-1300). 75c.

This little disc is very welcome because it contains two lovely songs that Miss Anderson has often chosen for her concert programs. In such little pieces, Miss Anderson's art shows at its zenith. She may very well be proud of this disc; it will surely add to her celebrity.

Loch Lomond. One side, and **Bendemeer's Stream.** Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with piano accompaniments by Jacob Hannemann. 1-10" disc (V-10-1301). 75c.

Simplicity is the keynote of the renditions of these familiar ballads. They are altogether charming, and those interested in them will find this disc highly satisfactory.

Mendelssohn: Elijah—O rest in the Lord. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Elijah—Woe unto Them.** Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with The Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (D-K-1556). \$2.

In a recent shipment from England, this fine record by Kathleen Ferrier of two arias from Mendelssohn's *Elijah* was included. It received high praise from the English critics when it was released some time ago. We find it worthy of that praise and do not hesitate to recommend it to our readers.

Warlock: A Prayer to St. Anthony of Padua and **Warlock: Sick Heart.** One side, and **Parrott: I Heard a Linnet Courting.** John Runge (tenor) with piano accompaniment. 1-10 disc" (PC-53). \$1.25.

Here is a disc that may be of interest to collectors of English art songs—two unrecorded songs by Peter Warlock and one by H. Ian Parrot. They are nicely sung by the young English tenor, John Runge, who we understand is making his recording debut with the present disc. The reproduction is very satisfactory.



DICTION

Shakespeare: Henry V—Excerpts. Laurence Olivier (speaking) with original music written by William Walton for the Two Cities Film played by Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by William Walton. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1128. \$5.

This is indeed a very disappointing album. Perhaps we expected too much. We rather thought that it would contain a series of spoken scenes, connected by printed notes that would give the running story of the play, with a background of the music which William Walton composed for the film. However, this recording is just about the opposite. It is Walton's music with an occasional reading from the play by Mr. Olivier. These readings are unrelated and the notes do not help much in an understanding of them. The notes assume that the reader is entirely familiar with the play and in themselves are quite unrelated to the recording. They quote much that is not spoken and they leave out much that is. One would think that the eminent scholar, Dr. J. Duncan Spaeth, who wrote them had never heard the records. They do however contain much illuminating material of value to Shakespearean students generally, but one should have the full text of Henry V before him to fully appreciate their value. With nothing but the records at hand they are rather meaningless.

The best that we can say for this album is that it makes a nice souvenir for those who have seen the film. It would serve to remind them of one of the greatest pictures that has ever appeared upon the screen. R.

CHORAL



Handel: Messiah—excerpts. Laura Stover (soprano), Lydia Summers (contralto), Harold Haugh (tenor), J. Alden Edkins (baritone), the Augustana Choir conducted by Henry Veld, with organ accompaniments by Brynolf Lundholm and Clarence Snyder. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set T. \$4.50.

This set was doubtless designed for those persons who would only be interested in the highlights from Handel's famous oratorio. Those who would like a complete recording will find the one recently released by Columbia a particularly fine one.

All of the soloists in the present abridged version are thoroughly capable, having sung with numerous oratorio societies including the Oratorio Society of New York; and the Augustana Choir (Moline, Ill.) is famous for its annual performance of the *Messiah*. We believe that most music lovers will find this a quite satisfactory recording. It contains about a dozen of the better known sections of the work.

Shvedoff: The Exchange of Diplomatic Notes between the Turkish Sultan and the Zaporozky Cossacks (1674). Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Serge Jaroff. 1-12" disc (C-7493M). \$1.

It appears that a couple of centuries ago a Cossack band refused to submit to a Turkish Sultan and answered his demands with a bold challenge. Shvedoff set the incident to music and the Don Cossack Chorus has made available this recorded version of the work. As we do not understand Russian, we can't tell what the whole thing is about, but from the ferocious tone of the singers we would judge that they would devour the old Sultan if they ever caught him. We rather believe that this disc is designed largely for Russian consumption.

CHILDREN



The Twelve Dancing Princesses (adapted from Grimm). Dramatic cast and musical cast with Russ Case and his orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set Y-330. \$4.

RCA Victor has certainly given this children's favorite fairy tale a grand setting, both dramatically and musically, on these unbreakable discs. If you have a favorite niece or nephew who is having a birthday, here is a most appropriate gift.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Music Comes to America (Revised Edition). By David Ewen. 295 pp. Allen, Towne and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aesch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IROC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musieraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okch, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polyder, RF—Radlofunkken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

- - - -

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U.S.A.

VOL. 15. NO. 6

AUGUST 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

A GROUP OF RECORDS has been issued in England known as The Royal School of Church Music Records. There are twenty-three in the set. The 10-inch are \$1.50 each and the 12-inch \$2 each. They may be purchased separately. The publishers of this bulletin are official agents for these discs in the U.S.A. A detailed list of them has been prepared and will be sent gratis to anyone interested.

As many persons, even those who are interested in English Church Music, may not know of the Royal School of Church Music, we asked the Rev. Herbert Boyce Satcher, a member of the Commission on Music of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, to prepare a few notes on this interesting School. Mr. Satcher's paper on the subject follows:

"Twenty-five years ago an epoch-making Report on Church Music in England was issued by a distinguished Committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Some fifteen years prior to that a group of leading Church musicians had formed the Church Music Society, whose numerous publications prepared the way for this further step, the personnel of the Committee being drawn from the membership of the Society. The Report, entitled *Music in Worship*, was received with wide acclaim and stirred up feverish activity.

"Five years later it bore tangible fruit in the organization of the School of English Church Music at a historic meeting in the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey, on St. Nicholas' Day, December 6, 1927. The plan was to invite choirs all over the country and beyond to become affiliated with the School for a small annual fee, which would entitle them to share in the benefits the School

could offer them, namely, courses of instruction in a College to be formed, participation in great central triennial festivals and smaller regional festivals, and close personal touch with the School not only by correspondence, but by visits of the Director and field representatives.

"Because St. Nicholas is the patron saint of choir boys and the organization meeting was held on his day, the College designed to implement the work of the School was named St. Nicholas' College. Dr. Sydney H. Nicholson, who had been Organist and Choirmaster of the Abbey for eight years, and a leader in the movement from the first, was appointed Director of the School and Warden of the College. He promptly resigned his important Abbey post, and with great energy and skill devoted the remainder of his life (he died May, 1947) and his fortune to the School.

"A lovely house at Chislehurst in Kent, half an hour from London, was acquired for the use of the College. It became a notable centre, the Mecca of Church musicians throughout the English-speaking world. During the difficult war years the College had to find hospitality elsewhere. With the coming of peace it acquired the distinction of royal recognition as the Royal School of Church Music, and found a permanent home at Canterbury, in close affiliation with Canterbury Cathedral.

"One of the most effective means of disseminating the principles for which the School stands has been gramophone records, though unfortunately insufficient care was taken with some of the earlier ones. Dr. Nicholson's lecture record is still valuable for elucidating the principles of speech-rhythm, as was shown most effectively, for example, at the Crystal

Palace Festival of 1936, when the great chorus of 4000 voices sang Psalms in perfect speech-rhythm with only one full rehearsal. The ROX series are superior recordings, and were made in the large London Church of St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, where the College Choir habitually sang the Sunday services just before the war, while still at Chislehurst. Of the twenty-six hymn tunes on these records eleven are in the Episcopal Hymnal of 1940. The varied treatment of stanzas is most interesting, showing possibilities which are all too seldom taken advantage of in this country."

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Stravinsky: The Firebird Suite. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-30. \$7.

The last previous *Firebird* made its appearance this past February when Columbia released a new set conducted by the composer which restored two sections to the score (CM-653). At that time we admitted our preference for Stokowski's colorful recordings (especially the Philadelphia Orchestra one). We still like Stokowski's reading. For those who are looking for a first rate recording of *Firebird* we highly recommend this new set by Ansermet. Our personal attachment for the Stokowski magic does not blind us to the many great qualities of this remarkable new recording. Ansermet is a well known authority on the music of Stravinsky and it was Ansermet who made the *Pétrouchka* recording on *ffrr* that was such a tremendous success.

From the standpoint of reproduction this set is a thriller. The third side, Dance of King Kastchei, is an example of how beautifully a full orchestra can

be reproduced. It is an outstanding example of *ffrr* reproduction. (These records are standard size).

The sixth side of this set is devoted to the *Scherzo*, or Dance of the Princesses with the Golden Apples, from the original version of the ballet. It really should not be placed last in the set. We suggest playing the first three sides in sequence, and then when turning the records, place this sixth side *Scherzo* first, so that it is actually the fourth side played, and of course continue with the last two movements as recorded. The way the set is pressed, the *Scherzo* is rather anti-climax after the stunning *Finale*. S.

Strauss, R.: Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme—Suite, Op. 60. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-693. \$6.

Two other recordings have been made of this work, an old one conducted by the composer for Polydor, and one which remained in the Victor catalog for a number of years conducted by Clemens Krauss. The Krauss set is unfortunately not available. He had the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and they played this work beautifully under his sympathetic direction. While we mourn the passing of any of the lovely Vienna Philharmonic recordings, we admit it was poorly recorded.

A fine new recording of this charming music is therefore in order and Fritz Reiner does great justice to it. His reading has sparkle, wit, and pace. We thoroughly enjoyed every side and thought Reiner most convincing and successful in revealing the subtleties of the score. The Pittsburgh Symphony plays with finish and elegance—Reiner has done wonders with this orchestra.

The reproduction of this set deserves a paragraph of its own. It is a model of clarity and good definition and seems to be one of Columbia's best to date. It has not the warmth or perspective of *ffrr* recording; but it is a good clean type of reproduction.

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme could stand more frequent programming these days. It is music with which one quickly becomes acquainted. Strauss wrote the incidental music to Max Reinhardt's production of Molière's comedy *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and the present suite of nine sections is drawn from this music. It retains its freshness today and is entirely worth while away from the play it was intended to accompany. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 13 ("Winter Reveries"). Santa Monica Civic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 4-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 801. \$5.85.

This enterprising orchestra and conductor again come forth with some unhackneyed music. Orig-

nally recorded for the Symphony Record Company, whose life was a short one, the Tchaikovsky *First Symphony* is now being made available throughout the country by Disc. Our records have Asch labels, and they are housed in the original Symphony Records Company album; but they are listed in the latest issue of the Disc catalog as album No. 801.

If the identity of the records sounds confusing, we must say that Rachmilovich's account of the score does not. This rising light on the musical horizon gives a highly interesting reading of a work that is rather uneven and of not great consequence, but which nevertheless has no trouble in sustaining one's interest. Tchaikovsky's progress as a symphonist really began with his *Second Symphony* which showed national tendencies. The *First Symphony* is not considered as representative of very much of anything—rather an early essay. Grove's dismisses the work in one brief sentence. Incidentally, it is usually called "Winter Day-Dreams" although "Winter Reveries" is a more poetic title. But for those who would have a complete collection of all of the romantic Russian master's symphonies, here is the missing link, in its first recording anywhere.

The performance is indeed good, and the reproduction, while of the dry unresonant type, is sufficient to convey the music. Surfaces vary from fair to noisy. S.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 60. The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-687. \$6.

Leinsdorf gives a very exciting and energetic account of this work, which is actually the sixth symphony which Dvorák wrote, although the first to be published. Previously available only in the Victor Set M-874 by Talich and the Czech Philharmonic, we now have a modern version by an American orchestra. Columbia is making mighty strides in building its catalog.

The Dvorák *First Symphony* is a naively light, dancing, sort of thing that bounces around in the best of humor. The exception is the *Adagio*, second movement, a song-like piece that wanders without much contrast. The third movement *Scherzo* is lively and sparkling, while the last movement is a vigorous affair that concludes with a well-built and memorable climax. It all adds up to a joyous work that does not deserve the stigma of a "first" symphony. We have the feeling that if it were known as the *Sixth*, which it really is, its popularity would be far greater. Fortunately we do not have to wait for some conductor to program it now that it is readily available in good recorded versions.

We believe Leinsdorf has established himself more firmly as a first rank conductor with this recording. It is a well knit job. The reproduction is satisfac-

tory although a little on the hard and brittle side. Surfaces on our set were very good. S.

Liszt: Mephisto Waltz. Three sides, and **Wolf-Ferrari: The Secret of Suzanne—Overture.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-281. \$3.

Artur Rodzinski's version of Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz* challenges the fine Koussevitzky recording that was released during February 1942. The New York Philharmonic-Symphony is not quite the instrument that the Boston Symphony is, nor does Rodzinski direct with all the virtuosity and abandon of Koussevitzky. Nevertheless, the actual recording is probably better in this new Columbia version.

Liszt's piece sounds rather dated, it must be confessed. The ecstatic frenzy into which Mephistopheles throws the villagers with his fiddling is not as fantastic and intoxicating as it must have sounded when it was first written. It is of chief interest in this day and age as a period-piece.

To one pair of ears the most attractive feature in this new album was the Overture to Wolf-Ferrari's "Secret of Suzanne," modestly tucked away on the last record-side. This sparkling music is excellently served by Rodzinski and his men, quite eclipsing Fiedler and the Boston "Pops" who have recorded it for Victor. D.

Tchaikovsky Waltzes. Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set A-483. \$3.85.

Tchaikovsky was most happy when composing tuneful waltzes. Six of the most attractive were selected for this delightful album—Waltzes from *The Sleeping Beauty*; *Swan Lake*; *The Nutcracker Suite* (Waltz of the Flowers); *Eugen Onegin*; *Serenade for Strings*; and *Symphony No. 5*. All are played with gay spirit and always in the best of taste by The Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles under the distinguished direction of Alfred Wallenstein. Recording—excellent.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (D-K-1589). \$2.

It is hard to conceive of a finer performance of this old-time overture which has held its popularity for one hundred and fifty years. This disc is a fine example of English Decca *fff* recording at its best.

Strauss, Johann—trans. Stokowski: Die Fledermaus—Waltzes. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-10" disc (V-10-1310). 75c.

If you like your Johann Strauss served *a la Stokowski*, here it is, faithfully reproduced by RCA Victor.

Prokofieff: Romeo and Juliet—Ballet Suite No. 2, Op. 64b. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1129. \$2.85.

About a year ago, Disc issued the complete recording of this work played by the Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of the composer. This month Koussevitzky selected four of the seven sections and recorded them with the Boston Symphony. The sections which Mr. Koussevitzky chose are *Montagues and Capulets*; *Juliet the Maiden*; *Dance*; and *Romeo and Juliet's Grave*.

As Prokofieff's music was thoroughly considered in our review of the Disc set which appeared in the July 1946 issue of THE NEW RECORDS, we will not further consider it at this time. It is unquestionably of importance and will be of prime interest to all those who have an affinity for contemporary music.

The Russian recording is technically not in a class with the present RCA Victor version. The Russians seem to be very much behind the rest of the world in the art of recording. Your choice, therefore, is whether you wish a complete recording of this work with mediocre reproduction or a cut version with the best of modern recording.

Glazounoff: Music from the Ballet Raymonda, Op. 57. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1133. \$4.85.

Raymonda was commissioned for production at the Imperial Theatre at St. Petersburg, where it was first performed in 1898. Nearly a half-century passed before it made its appearance in America. The first performance in this country was given by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the New York City Center of Music and Drama on 12 March 1946. Alexander Danilova was in the title role and the production was received with mild enthusiasm.

Raymonda is a ballet in the grand manner with three acts and four scenes. It is in the style of the famous Tchaikovsky ballets. The suite from a musical standpoint is mildly interesting but tends toward monotony before it is completed. It is definitely background music and requires the action of the ballet for its full enjoyment. We rather feel that this album will be of interest to lovers of the ballet but will not prove to be of much value to music lovers generally. The Boston "Pops" has done its best with what it had to work with, and RCA Victor has been successful in providing a most faithful reproduction. R.

Suppé: The Beautiful Galatea—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9494). \$1.

An old favorite, nicely played with plenty of spirit by the Boston "Pops," and brilliantly recorded by RCA Victor.

Kostelanetz Favorites. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-681. \$5.

Columbia's publicity department states that these selections were chosen by Kostelanetz as the ones that are most popular with his audiences the world over. The Maestro certainly gives them his loving care in these recordings and does not stint in the use of honey, with which he generously coats all of them. It's a lot of sweetness to take at one hearing.

The selections are: *Jalousie*; *Romance* (Rubinstein); *In a Monastery Garden*; *The Rosary*; *Ritual Dance of Fire*; *Souvenir*; *The Swan*; and *Yours Is My Heart Alone*.

Strauss, Johann: Tritsch-Tratsch Polka, Op. 214 and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Flight of the Bumble Bee.** One side, and **Wolf-Ferrari: Jewels of the Madonna**—Dance of the Camorristi. Carnegie Pops Orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. 1-12" disc (C-7566M). \$1.

This gay fare is ideal for a lovely summer evening and the Carnegie Pops Orchestra under the direction of Maurice Abravanel presents them in just the proper spirit. Splendidly recorded.

Tchaikovsky: March Slav, Op. 31. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (D-K-1282). \$2.

Here is a record to show off your new phonograph. It is one of the best English Decca *ffrr* recordings, Fistoulari, one of the really great living conductors, makes the most of his opportunity with this brilliant and tuneful Tchaikovsky selection.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Rubbra: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, Op. 31. Albert Sammons (violin) and Gerald Moore (piano). 2-12" discs (V-C-3547 and V-C-3548). \$3.80.

This pair of discs will introduce to many American music lovers a sample of the work of the English composer, Edmund Rubbra. Mr. Rubbra was born in Northampton in 1901, and, after studying piano-forte with his mother, and with Cyril Scott, he won a musical scholarship at Reading University and later a composition scholarship at the Royal Conservatory of Music, where he studied under Holst and Vaughan Williams. He has two symphonies to his credit, one composed during 1935-37 and the second in 1937, several choral works, and a number of chamber music compositions. The present sonata is the first work of his to be recorded.

We feel that the following taken from a rather detailed review by A. R. in *The Gramophone* (London) will give our readers a good idea of the present

work:

"This second sonata for violin and piano, composed in 1932, starts off, on its first page, by giving us a phrase of such charm and grace that the memory delightedly seizes on it and stores it away . . .

"There seems to me to be a general relationship between all the thematic material, which becomes, on occasion, particular. Thus the theme of the middle movement (*Lament*) achieves a kind of apotheosis in the last movement.

"The texture of the music is beautifully clear and never over-loaded, and if the first movement, pastoral at its start, reminds one of the lyricism of John Ireland (an admirable model), it avoids his fault of sometimes writing too many notes. Rubbra solves formal problems most happily by focusing attention on his two related themes so that they flow in and out of the music without the constraint of a typical 'development' section: and, after a brief recapitulation, he adds a dance-like coda (the opening theme in a quick dotted rhythm before hinted at).

"Not only is this music tuneful, but, as the *Lament* soon discloses, it is also music of strongly passionate feeling. There is a particularly lovely bit of writing in this *Lament* in which violin and piano play a rising melody an octave apart. The last movement, marked strident, and very rhythmic, lives up to its title and is immensely vigorous . . ."

As the recording has been successfully accomplished, this pair of discs should be quite attractive to those persons who would enjoy an entirely new chamber work.

Debussy: Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano.

Three sides, and Ravel: *Berceuse* (*Sur le nom de Fauré*). Zino Francescatti (violin) and Robert Casadesus (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-280. \$3.

This last completed work of Debussy, which the ailing composer presented with the violinist, Gaston Poulet, at his last public appearance (5 May 1917), is beautifully played by the two distinguished French artists, Zino Francescatti and Robert Casadesus. The work itself has more sentimental and historical value than true musical worth. Debussy, with the Germany Army moving ever nearer to his beloved Paris, was attempting to restore French music to its proper place and free it from the strong German influence which had tended to mold it since the days of Wagner. He was in failing health and it was only with superhuman efforts that he was able to finish this sonata. It shows the effect of this strain; it is uneven in character and the obvious attempts at melodic originality are none too successful. As one considers the conditions under which it was written, it is very possible to see in it a work of heroic proportions. Students and admirers of Debussy will doubtless cherish this fine performance by the composer's two greatly talented compatriots.

R.

Beethoven: Grand Fugue, Op. 133. The Kroll Quartet. 2-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 73. \$2.85.

There are both sweeping grandeur and exciting drama in this great fugue, *Grosse Fuge*, Opus 133, by Beethoven. The *Grosse Fuge* was originally the finale of Beethoven's Quartet in B-flat, Opus 130. However, when the work was first performed, in March 1826, the audience was bewildered and antagonistic to the concluding fugue, even though the rest of the quartet was received with favor. Thus when Artaria took upon itself to publish the new quartet, a suggestion was made to Beethoven that he should rewrite the finale. This he agreed to do, and even today when performances of the B-flat quartet take place, it is the quick and joyful finale which Beethoven composed a few months before his death, that we hear.

One is struck by the dramatic impact, the modern effects which Beethoven achieved in this not too often heard music. Surely this is the titan cast in its most heroic mold!

Victor issued records of the *Grosse Fuge* many years ago, performed by the Budapest String Quartet on (V-8586-7) and more recently Columbia released a version for string orchestra by the Busch Chamber Players (X-221). Therefore, a modern recording of this monumental work in its original quartet form is in order. The Kroll Quartet has assumed this difficult task and has accomplished a quite satisfactory performance. The reproduction is excellent and the record surfaces reasonably quiet.

Beethoven: Sonata for Horn and Piano, Op. 17.

Dennis Brain (horn) and Denis Matthews (piano). 2-12" discs (C-DX-1152 and C-DX-1153). \$4.

When this recording was released in England, it received the highest praise. A. R. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) states:

"The performance of this charming work could not be bettered. You feel that there are here two real musicians thoroughly enjoying themselves and communicating that enjoyment. Dennis Brain's tone is most beautiful, ravishing indeed on the frequently recurring C (above middle C). The whole of the other-worldliness of the French horn seems to be contained in that note. Denis Matthews makes his part translucent and sparkling and the phrasing of both artists is impeccable. The recording, too, is extraordinarily good.

"This may be small Beethoven but it falls on the ear like an April shower on the parched earth."

Editorially in the same publication, Compton Mackenzie says: "This recording would be my personal choice among the records issued during the last three months."

This is indeed high praise, but we are happy to endorse the opinions of these two able critics. Columbia issued a domestic recording of this work a

number of years ago by Gottfried von Freiberg and Yella Pessl but this is no longer listed in the present catalog.

OPERA



Verdi: La Traviata (complete opera). (Sung in Italian.) Soloists with chorus and orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Rome, conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza. 15-12" discs in albums with libretto. Columbia Set Op-25. \$18.

To Columbia goes the first lap of the "complete opera race" with this release of two handsome albums which contain a performance of Verdi's *La Traviata*—the first domestically released, post-war, complete operatic set.

There has been need of a good, up-to-date recording of one of the most popular of all operas, for the old Columbia and Victor versions of *La Traviata*, made in the pioneer days of electrical recording, with mediocre artists, have been crying for a successor. It is therefore a great pity that this new set is not the satisfying answer to this need. The definitive *Traviata*, that can be taken unreservedly to one's heart, has yet to be made. Perhaps it never will be.

Recorded shortly after V-J Day, during the summer of 1945, this new *Traviata* was made in the Royal Opera House in Rome. All of which leads one to the wry speculation that there would be far more red-tape and difficulty, far greater obstacles attending the recording of an opera of this length (30 record-sides) in this country, where facilities for free artistic expression are supposed to predominate, than in a land which has just suffered invasion, occupation and overwhelming defeat.

Certainly, the recording technique given the set is immeasurably superior to that of the two earlier versions; for this let us be thankful. Balance between voices and orchestra is admirable, and the latter, under Vincenzo Bellezza (well remembered at the Metropolitan), is realistically and clearly reproduced; so is the fine chorus. Signor Bellezza gives a splendid account of this great score, which can easily turn into a series of pitfalls for the conductor who is not fully aware of its nuances and flavor. Not for nothing has Signor Bellezza's name adorned the rosters of the world's principal opera houses.

With all these admirable factors, the performance remains a routine one—in no sense stellar, certainly not one of fine-grained distinction.

The reason for this is that Verdi's music depends tremendously on the vocal art and interpretative gifts of its principal singers. Adriana Guerrini, Luigi Infantino and Paolo Silveri do not offer the solution for those requirements.

Signora Guerrini is by far the best singer of the

cast. Indeed, she is an artist who commands respect and attention. The trouble is that hers is not the vocal timbre for the role of *Violetta*. One has the impression that this *Violetta* is a pretty determined and dominating character. There is nothing of the fragile *Dame aux Camelias*; little of the nostalgic perfume of Second Empire drawing rooms; none of the languor of an era when swooning and perfumed love-letters were the rule of the day.

From her first entrance it is quite evident that Signora Guerrini is the possessor of a fine, solid, darkly-colored voice and of an assured and commanding manner in presenting it. She dominates every scene, not through an exquisite delicacy of voice and style, but rather through sheer power and assurance. This is not *Violetta*.

Having made these reservations, it is only fair to add that the soprano vocalizes well and that she has a strong rhythmic sense. Her *Sempre Libera* is sung in the proper high key, its scales and runs, its high C's and D-flats, brilliantly encompassed. The tones are often steely in their impressive volume.

Signora Guerrini is well suited to the passionate outburst of the second act, *Amami Alfredo!* This is a splendid moment. She also displays a feeling for both text and situation in the pathetic final act. Her reading of the letter from *Germont* is excellent, but the subsequent *Addio del Passato* is often coarse in texture. The whole thing is too heavy. Most assuredly this is not the voice and style for this frail, lilac-scented character. Galli-Curci and Bori were *Violettas* who captured the aura of a period; Signora Guerrini cannot.

The roles of *Alfredo* and *Germont* are sung by competent but undistinguished singers. Luigi Infantino has a good natural voice, when he doesn't sing too open. His best work in the unsympathetic role of *Violetta's* lover is in the first act *Brindisi* and the last act *Parigi, o cara*. Charm and refinement are hard to find, other than an ebulliently youthful spirit. The tenor sounds strained in his one aria, which is not well sung. His is a naive art.

More palatable is the *Germont* of Paolo Silveri, though the voice and manner are too bright and youthful to suggest *Alfredo's* blundering old father. This *Germont* lacks the silvery, distinguished touch a Giuseppe De Luca or a Riccardo Stracciari could give it. However, Mr. Silveri rises to the challenge of *Di Provenza il Mar* with brilliant high notes. The whole thing is more brilliant than benign.

Other artists include Maria Huder, Adelio Zagonara, Paolo Rakowsky, Carlo Platania, Gino Conti and Blando Giusti. All are adequate. Mr. Bellezza conducts with much spirit, though he takes *Violetta's* lovely, thrice-repeated phrase of act three—*Che fia? morir mi sento, pietà, gran Dio, di me*—too fast for the taste of this reviewer. There are small passages, generally cut in American performances, which are here restored. This is nice.

Recording is excellent, but surfaces, particularly the last inch on each record, are apt to make the voices sound a bit fuzzy. Whatever its shortcomings, let us be grateful for a modern recording of Verdi's perennially lovely opera.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Bizet: Carmen—The Flower Song. (Sung in French). One side, and **Mozart: Die Zauberflöte**—Bildnisarie. (Sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (PA-R-20550). \$2.

Méhul: Joseph—Mein Vaterland. (Sung in German). One side, and **Haydn: The Creation**—In Native Worth. (Sung in English). Richard Tauber (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Henry Gehl. 1-12" disc (PA-R-20543). \$2.

These four selections by Richard Tauber are an unadulterated pleasure for lovers of fine singing. Mr. Tauber is a singers' singer, a vocal artist of the most unusual attainments.

These Parlophone records were probably made in England during the tenor's long stay during the late war. They find the singer in excellent voice and mood.

This writer remembers Mr. Tauber as a peerless *Tamino* and *Don Ottavio*, in some performances of Mozart in Munich during the dear, dead days of 1927. It is therefore a pleasure to have the distinguished tenor's flawless account of the *Bildnisarie* from *The Magic Flute* perpetuated on wax.

The singer's English is not too clear in the oratorio aria *In Native Worth* from Haydn's *The Creation*, but the style is a joy to listen to. The aria from *Méhul's Joseph* (sung in German) stirs similar sentiments of recognition.

Mr. Tauber also sings the *Flower Song* from *Carmen*, in excellent French. Except for a rather strained high B-flat in the climax, this is another record that should gladden the hearts of those who are looking for especially artistic singing.

The tenor is beautifully and honestly recorded and enjoys fine orchestral accompaniments. Surfaces are good.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Handel: Rodelinda—Art Thou Troubled? (Act I) One side, and **Gluck: Orpheus**—What Is Life? (Act III). (Sung in English.) Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (D-K1466). \$2.

These two arias from operas of another age are nicely sung in English by Kathleen Ferrier, who by the way has a gorgeous contralto voice. It would seem that the English words that Miss Ferrier uses have little to do with the original texts, however, most listeners will enjoy the music without regard to the meaning of the lyrics. The soloist is well

supported by the London Symphony under the able direction of Malcolm Sargent.

Wagnerian Excerpts. (Sung in German.) Torsten Ralf (tenor) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fritz Busch. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-634. \$5.

C-71823D. *Tannhäuser*—Rome Narrative (Act III).

C-71824. *Parsifal*—Nur eine Waffe taugt (Act III). One side, and *Die Meistersinger*—Am stillen Herd (Act I).

C-71825D. *Die Meistersinger*—Probelied: Fanget an! (Act I). One side, and *Die Meistersinger*—Preislied (Act III).

C-71826D. *Lohengrin*—Gralserzählung: In fernem Land (Act III). One side, and *Lohengrin*—Abschied (Act III).

This album constitutes the debut of Torsten Ralf, Wagnerian tenor of the Metropolitan, on domestic Columbia records. With the engagement of Mr. Ralf, Columbia has secured an authentic artist, a good musician and a man well schooled in Wagnerian tradition.

However, these seven excerpts reveal a voice that is often strained in its thin upper register, and dry and nasal in other portions of the scale. There is none of the vocal splendor and energy of Melchior, for instance, and Mr. Ralf's offerings (six of which have also been recorded by the *Great Dane*) are likely to suffer in a record to record comparison.

It was a happy thought when the tenor decided to include the surging passage *Fanget an!* from *Die Meistersinger* in this album, for there was no domestic record of this lovely moment available. *Am stillen herd* from the same opera is also one of this album's better recordings.

The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by reliable and experienced Fritz Busch benefits from clear, elastic recording and companions Mr. Ralf in what is more a sound, workmanlike job than anything which savors of inspiration or ecstasy.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Rossini Arias. (Sung in Italian.) Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-691. \$4.

C-72129D. *Cenerentola*—Nacqui all' affanno (Recitative, Aria, and Rondo finale) (Act II).

C-72130D. *L'Italiana in Algeri*—Cruda sorte! One side, and *Semiramide*—Bel raggio lusinghier (Act I).

C-72131D. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*—Una voce poco fa (Act I).

It is a pleasure to listen to singing that is as refined and finished as Jennie Tourel's of four Ros-

sini arias. Her voice is warm and flexible and records delightfully.

One generally associates high sporanos with Rossini's music. Such *prima-donnas* as Adelina Patti, Luisa Tetrazzini and Maria Barrientos have made a special success of the music of the Pesaro composer. But mezzos and dramatic sopranos are also fond of taking a fling in this direction with the supporting knowledge that Rossini wrote most of these roles with a mezzo-soprano voice in mind. Rose Bampton, Ebe Stignani and Conchita Supervia have all been well represented by Rossini recordings, but none of them with quite the successful results of Miss Tourel.

Particularly fine is the aria *Nacqui all' affano* from *La Cenerentola*. The singer's recitative is a joy and her terminating rondo is notable for the lightness and bouyancy of the scale passages. There is no straining or striving for effect, though Miss Tourel undoubtedly does not command the abandon or the sensational chest tones of Conchita Supervia, for instance—a lamented artist who was a law unto herself.

The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under Pietro Cimara's admirable direction is another distinct asset of this treasureable album. Recording and surfaces mark a distinct step forward in Columbia's technique. These features seemed practically perfect.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

VIOLIN



Bennett: Hexapoda (Five Studies in Jitteroptera).

Three sides, and **Dyer: Florida Night Song** (from "An Outlandish Suite"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-454. \$2.25.

Hexapoda, according to Webster, is the general name given to insects, or in common language, bugs. Mr. Bennett has narrowed its sense in this instance to Jitterbugs. Thus we have these five studies in Jitteroptera. To us they are neither fish nor fowl. They are neither *hot* enough for the Jitterbug nor sound enough for the conservative music lover. Perhaps we do not understand them; perhaps we do not properly appreciate them. Perhaps we really do not know what we are talking about. Well, let us see what Mr. Bennett has to say about his opus by referring to the notes that accompany this album.

It appears that a friend remarked to Mr. Bennett one evening that there was a need for "a new music which would have all the quality of American folk music and yet be musically erudite enough for sober consideration by serious musicians." Mr. Bennett acted on his friend's suggestion and the next day wrote the five pieces known as *Hexapoda*. The composer is frank enough to admit that "they may be condemned by the fine musicians of my

time as being merely Cole Porter's and Jerome Kern's orchestrator having fun; and by the real Jitterbugs as being too subtle and contemplative to be hot. But they are presented with sincerity and the hope that they are both good music and good sport."

And now that we know the story of *Hexapoda*, the adventurous music lovers may proceed to investigate this recording if they feel so inclined. Heifetz must have felt that the work was worth while or he would not have spent the time necessary to prepare it for recording. It wasn't an easy job as you will realize when you hear these discs. R.

Ponce—trans. Heifetz: Estrellita. One side, and **Korngold: March** (from the Suite "Much Ado About Nothing"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniment by Emanuel Bay. 1-10" disc (V-10-1314). 75c.

Why Heifetz decided to play Korngold's March as a violin solo is somewhat a mystery to us. It seems totally unsuited to his instrument and doesn't present any great technical challenge. *Estrellita* is a pleasing little melody and Heifetz makes it sound quite charming.

PIANO



Variations on a Theme of Paganini in A minor.

One side, and **Chopin: Three Etudes, Op. 25** (No. 9 "Butterfly," No. 1 "Harp," No. 6 "Thirds"). First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-46-0010). \$1.

"Variations on a Theme of Paganini in A minor" is well-known to most radio listeners as it is the signature of the popular "Four concert artists playing four concert grands"—First Piano Quartet. The reverse side of this disc contains some melodious Chopin music arranged for four pianos, played with spirit and in the mood of these famous radio artists. All selections have been faithfully recorded by RCA Victor.

Saint-Saens: Allegro Appassionato, Op. 70. José Iturbi (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1315). 75c.

The virtuosity displayed by the soloist makes this selection seem very much more important than it really is. However, the vast army of Iturbi fans will probably go for this record in such numbers that it will soon be well up on the list of "best sellers." Reproduction—excellent.

Schubert: Impromptu in G, Op. 90, No. 3. One side, and **Schubert: Waltzes.** Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72047D). \$1.

Here is a single disc by Maryla Jonas for those who would like to sample the work of this sterling

pianist. Miss Jonas has chosen some of the most delightful and tuneful music of the inimitable Schubert for this record. Reproduction—good.

Beethoven: Theme and Variations in F, Op. 34.

Leonard Shure (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 602. \$3.

When Beethoven sent this work to his publishers, Breitkopf and Härtel, he stated in a letter to them that it was written "in a really entirely new style and in quite a different way." Upon examination the student will find that each of the six variations, except the last two, are written in a different key alternating downward in major and minor thirds. These tuneful variations are mighty interesting and show the great composer in one of his happiest moods, when ideas seem to come to him without any effort on his part.

They are beautifully played by the brilliant American pianist, Leonard Shure, who is well known for his many appearances with some of the leading symphony orchestras of this country. The only other recording of this work that we know of was made by Artur Schnabel and is available only in Vol. XIV of the Beethoven Sonata Society (limited edition).

In the present recording, Vox has achieved a most realistic reproduction.

Alan Hovanes and John Cage Modern Piano Compositions. Maro Ajemian (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 875. \$3.85.

This pair of discs contains some most unusual music and introduces to record collectors two young American composers, Alan Hovanes and John Cage. The first two selections are by Hovanes and the third by Cage. In the first selection (occupying two sides) Hovanes imitates ancient Armenian instruments, especially the *kanoon* which somewhat resembles a zither. This selection entitled *Mihr* is scored for two pianos and Maro Ajemian joins the composer in its performance. The second selection *Invocations to Vahagn*, IV and V finds Miss Ajemian at the piano with the composer adding exotic rhythms on a Chinese gong and drums.

John Cage is the fellow who doctors up the piano by muting the strings with screws, bolts and bits of rubber. The third selection *Amores I and IV* is an example of his work in that field. The "prepared piano" is played by Miss Ajemian.

All of this "music" is a far cry from the beautifully flowing melodies and rich harmonies to which our ears are accustomed. Perhaps the venturesome will find it interesting.

At the Piano. Pauline Alpert (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 116. \$4.75.

There is only one Pauline Alpert, as anyone knows who has heard this unique artist. No one tickles the keys as she does—she is known as "The Young Lady

Who Sounds Like Two Pianos."

The present album contains eight well-known pieces. At first glance, one may feel that he has heard these selections too many times already and just couldn't stand to hear them again, but when he hears Miss Alpert's arrangements of them everything is quite different. She can take a tune that is worn threadbare and fairly make it sparkle.

Among the old melodies that Miss Alpert has chosen for this album are: *Humoresque*; *Blue Danube*; *Song of India*; and *Dancing Doll*. The piano reproduction on these Vinylite discs is just about as good as we have ever heard.



VOCAL

Songs of Lucienne Boyer. Lucienne Boyer (soprano) with orchestra. (Sung in French). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-694. \$4.

Lucienne Boyer's admirers, and she has many of them in America, will doubtless be very enthusiastic about this charming album. Miss Boyer has selected a number of delightful songs, that she has more or less made her very own, for this collection, and presents them in her inimitable manner. They are: *Parlez-moi d'amour*; *Dans la fumée*; *Sans toi*; *Si petite*; *Parle-moi d'autre chose*; *J'ai laissée mon coeur*; *Beaucoup*; and *Un amour comme le nôtre*.

Kol Nidre (trad.—arr. Secunda). One side, and **Sandler: Eli, Eli.** Richard Tucker (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Sholom Secunda. 1-12" disc (C-72198D). \$1.

This disc certainly contains outstanding renditions of these well-beloved Hebrew selections. They are reverently and artistically sung by Richard Tucker of the Metropolitan Opera. We believe that this is Mr. Tucker's recording debut. We shall be looking forward to additional records by this brilliant young tenor. An adequate chorus nicely supports the soloist in the present recordings. Columbia has recorded them most faithfully.

Listen to Our Story. Various artists. 4-10" discs in album, with *Sing-Along-Book* edited by Alan Lomax. Brunswick Set B-1024. \$4.

The recordings in this album were selected by Alan Lomax, the noted authority on American folklore, from among a number of Brunswick recordings that were made about 1928. For use with these discs, Mr. Lomax has prepared a *Sing-Along-Book* containing the full text of each song and comprehensive notes on both the ballads and the singers. Anyone interested in music of this character will find this album and book of unique interest.

The ballads contained in this collection are: *Lady Gay*; *Stackerlee*; *The Derby Ram*; *Pretty*

Polly; True Religion; The Death of John Henry; Rock About, My Saro Jane; and The Girl I Left Behind Me.

Chansons. (Sung in French). Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel and Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-689. \$4.

Lily Pons' latest album bears the misleading title of *Chansons*. *Chansons* would indicate national airs or songs that have their roots in folk origin, but certainly not the sophisticated art-songs Mme. Pons offers.

There is little to enthuse over in the celebrated singer's present album. Never has her voice sounded more shaky or tenuous, and her intonation has many uncertain moments.

Duparc's beautiful *L'Invitation au Voyage* is ineffective in Mme. Pons' voice; so is Alfred Bachelet's *Chere Nuit*. A more solid tone and a greater sense of text are here required. Faure's *Après un Reve* and *Les Roses d'Ispahan* fare somewhat better, but they are nothing to go into ecstasy about. All these songs sound high, thin and disembodied as presented by Mme. Pons. There are better records by others of these numbers—Eleanor Steber's *Chere Nuit* and Maggie Teyte in the Faure and Duparc songs.

The novelty of the album is the set of Darius Milhaud pieces—*Chanson de Ronsard*—commissioned by the singer in 1941. The texts were chosen by the composer from the verses of the great 16th century poet, and their titles are *A une Fontaine*, *Dieu vous garde*, *A Cupidon*, and *Tais-toi, Babillarde*. It is difficult to find merit in these compositions, obviously fashioned to suit the altitudinous register of Mme. Pons voice. Words are completely lost in a vocal line that vaults constantly above the staff, and the songs are peppered with vocalises and florid effects.

Accompaniment is provided by a rather opaque orchestra under the direction of both Kostelanetz and Abravanel.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Norton: Chu Chin Chow—Vocal Gems. Light Opera Company. 1-12" disc (V-C-2260). \$1.90.

Millöcker: The Dubarry—Ja, so ist sie. One side, and **Millöcker: The Dubarry**—Ich schenk' mein Herz. (Sung in German.) Jarmila Ksirova (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Theo Mackeben. 1-10" disc (V-EG-6485). \$1.35.

Those persons who are interested in light opera selections will find these discs worth investigation. The first is a nicely sung medley of songs from the famous operetta *Chu Chin Chow*, which was so popular in England and America during World War I. The second disc contains two songs from the popular *Die Dubarry* sung in German by the excellent soprano, Jarmila Ksirova. Both discs are splendidly recorded.

Purcell: Sound the Trumpet. One side, and **Purcell: The Indian Queen**—Let Us Wander, and **Purcell: King Arthur**—Shepherd, Shepherd Cease Decoying. Isobel Baillie (soprano) and Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (C-DB-2201). \$1.50.

These pleasing and interesting duets are beautifully sung and well-recorded. As little of Purcell's music is available on records, the present disc is worthy of investigation.

Sound the Trumpet is from an ode that Purcell composed for Queen Mary's birthday in 1697. The other two duets were edited by Moffat, who changed the words considerably, because he very likely felt that the original text was a bit too broad for present-day listeners.

If you are interested in 17th century music, the present disc will be of more than passing interest.

Early American Carols. Sung by John Jacob Niles. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 732. \$3.75.

A new album by John Jacob Niles is always an occasion of much rejoicing by his many admirers. Mr. Niles is unquestionably one of our greatest students of American folk music and his recordings may be considered authentic. The present album contains: *The Seven Joys of Mary; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; I Wonder As I Wander; The Carol of the Birds; The Carol of the Angels; and The Little Liking*. A beautifully printed booklet with notes and the text of each song is included with this album.

The songs, the renditions, and the artistic album are all of high quality, but the reproduction leaves much to be desired. It is muddy and not up to the standard we expect in present-day recordings.

Creole Songs. Adelaide Van Wey (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Robert N. Hill. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 629. \$3.

Creole folk songs originated on the plantations of the French and Spanish colonists of Louisiana. They are sung in the patois that is still the idiom of a large proportion of the natives of that section of the country. Miss Van Wey, who has recorded a dozen or so of them for this unusual album, was born in the South and has made a study of the folklore of that region. She has a most pleasing voice of wide range, and judging from these records, it would seem that it would be very difficult to find anyone better suited for the task she has assumed.

We do not recall any other recordings of Creole folk songs and so the present album is of prime importance to those music lovers who are interested in collecting examples of the folk music of our country. They have been very nicely recorded and the record surfaces are quite smooth.

An attractive leaflet with illuminating notes by Miss Van Wey is included with this fascinating album.

Novello: Glamorous Night—When the Gipsy Played. One side, and **Novello: Glamorous Night**—Glamorous Night. Mary Ellis (soprano) with the Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra conducted by Charles Prentice. 1-12" disc (V-C-2742). \$1.90.

Novello: Glamorous Night—Shine Through My Dreams. Trefor Jones (tenor) with the Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra conducted by Charles Prentice. One side, and **Novello: Glamorous Night**—Fold Your Wings. Mary Ellis (soprano) and Trefor Jones (tenor) with the Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra conducted by Charles Prentice. 1-12" disc (V-C-2743). \$1.90.

The above selections are from the musical play "Glamorous Night," which had a long and successful run in London shortly before World War II. They were recorded by members of the original cast. They are pleasing enough in their way, and if you are fond of typical English musical comedy music, you'll probably find these discs quite enjoyable.

Tchaikovsky: None but the Weary Heart, Op. 6, No. 6. One side, and **Gallet: Elégie.** Joan Hammond (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore and violoncello obbligati. 1-10" disc (V-B-9486). \$1.35.

This pleasing little record just arrived from England. It contains well-sung versions of these popular selections. Miss Hammond's diction is so clear that every word may be easily understood and the charming violoncello obbligati add greatly to the attractiveness of this disc.

Geehl: For You Alone. One side, and **Youmans: Without a Song.** Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with M-G-M Studio Orchestra conducted by Georgie Stoll. 1-10" disc (MGM-30005). 75c.

Bizet: Agnus Dei. (Sung in Latin). One side, and **Danish Children's Song.** (Sung in Danish and English). Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with M-G-M Studio Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Georgie Stoll. 1-10" disc. (MGM-30006). 75c.

These are the first M-G-M records to reach the studio and we are sorry to report that they are pretty poor. Both are over-amplified which gives them an unpleasant strident quality. It is our guess that they were recorded by technicians who are used to recording on film for the movies. Recording on wax for discs to be played in the home is quite a different thing and requires a very different technique.

The disc containing *Agnus Dei* and *Danish Children's Song* is not quite so bad as the first one listed above. The rather good chorus sort of softens this one a little, but we can see no excuse for issuing the other record. As one listens, he has the impression of a huge man with a big voice trying so very, very hard to sing a couple of popular ballads as loud as he can, with a rather squeaky orchestra surging backward and forward at the whim of the technician at the volume control in the recording booth.

Songs of American Sailormen. Mordy Bauman (baritone) with instrumental accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 75. \$3.75.

For those who may have been looking for a collection of sea songs, this album should be just the thing. It contains a fine assortment sung by the very capable baritone, Mordy Bauman, with appropriate instrumental accompaniments. Among the group will be found: *Rio Grande*; *Whiskey Johnny*; *The Drunken Sailor*; *Blow the Man Down*, and several others. The recording is entirely satisfactory throughout.

Coward: Sigh No More, and I Wonder What Happened to Him (one side each). 1-10" disc (V-B-9433). \$1.35.

Coward: Nina, and Matelot (one side each). 1-10" disc (V-B-9434). \$1.35.

Coward: Never Again, and Wait a Bit, Joe (one side each). 1-10" disc (V-B-9435). \$1.35.

All from "Sigh No More" and sung by Noel Coward (baritone) with the Piccadilly Theatre Orchestra (*I Wonder What*, and *Wait a Bit*, with piano accompaniment).

These three discs will have a particular appeal for those GI's who were fortunate enough to have seen Noel Coward's revue "Sigh No More" in London, before they headed for home. All of the songs are smart in the Noel Coward manner and his many fans in this country will doubtless also find them of interest. We might mention that if you are not of that rather sophisticated Coward clan that just thinks Noel is too wonderful and clever for words, you had better risk at least one ear on these ditties before you part with your cash in exchange for the records of them.

CHILDREN



The Story of Celeste. Victor Jory (narrator) with orchestra conducted by Ray Bloch. 2-10" discs in album. Signature Set C-1. \$2.25.

Following the great success of "Tubby the Tuba" and "Pee-Wee the Piccolo," Paul Tripp has written another clever little story which George Kleinsinger has set to quite tuneful and amusing music. This new story is called "Celeste" and tells of how the heroine has a beautiful little tune that no one seems to want, until one day along comes Prince 'Cello in search of a new melody. A contest is held and finally Miss Celeste's tune is chosen by the lovely prince and everything turns out very nicely.

The story of Miss Celeste is a bit more involved than that of Masters Tubby and Pee-Wee and not as easy for the little folks to follow, nor is it quite as interesting. However, as in the previous stories the characters are taken by the various instruments of the orchestra and the children learn their names and

how they sound without realizing that that is one of the important functions of these albums.

Mother Goose Songs. Sung by Frank Luther, with orchestra and sound effects. 1-12" disc in folder. Decca C.V. 100. \$2.

Nursery Rhymes. Sung by Frank Luther, with orchestra and sound effects. 1-12" disc in folder. Decca C.V. 101. \$2.

Frank Luther is one of the kiddies' great favorites; his voice is pleasing and the little ones can easily understand every word. He has recorded the familiar Mother Goose songs and a medley of nursery rhymes on these two 12" unbreakable discs, each housed in an attractive folder printed in colors. The unbreakable feature of these records will likely appeal to most parents.

Beethoven—His Story and His Music. Floyd Mack (speaking) with Vox Symphony Orchestra conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 260. \$3.75.

This album is the fourth in a series, whose purpose it is to acquaint young people with great composers and their music. The first three were devoted to the music of Mozart, Schubert and Tchaikovsky.

The idea is a very clever one. The story of Beethoven's life is told in a series of interesting episodes, and in each episode there is introduced an appropriate bit of the composer's music. A complete list of the selections played is listed on the cover of the album, so if the children like a particular piece, a full recording of it may be obtained for their further enjoyment and study. We surely feel that after a child has listened to these discs, he will certainly always remember something of Beethoven and his music.

ORGAN



Rudolf Friml Melodies. Jesse Crawford (organ). 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-548. \$3.75.

Throughout the years of electric recording there has been a steady demand for organ records by Jesse Crawford—Mr. Crawford made some of the first electrical recordings. He has a style all his own, and fans, who delight in soulful melodies played on movie palace organs, go for his discs in a big way. The present album contains the following well-known Friml tunes: *Indian Love Call*; *Rose Marie*; *Giannina Mia*; *Sympathy*; *L'amour toujours l'amour*; *Only a Rose*; *Allah's Holiday*; and *Chansonette*.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost., C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polyder, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schlirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

J. P. Concer
P. 4

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 7

SEPTEMBER 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

Dmitri Shostakovich: The Man and His Work. By Ivan Martynov. Translated from the Russian by T. Guralsky. 197 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$2.75.

We do not know why this book is given the subtitle "The Man and His Work." It is certainly all work and little or no man. Less than three pages at the end of this book are devoted to Shostakovich's life and personality. However, if one is interested in Shostakovich's background and early life he may gain much information from *Dmitri Shostakovich* by Victor Ilyich Seroff published by Alfred A. Knopf (New York) in 1943.

The present volume is devoted almost entirely to the consideration of the composer's works, which are each considered in great detail up to and including his Ninth Symphony which was completed in August 1945. In the preface the author states that "this book was written in the winter of 1942" but this is obviously a typographical error. It probably was written in the winter of 1946.

In considering this book we must realize that the author has been a student of Shostakovich's music for many years and that he is an ardent admirer of the composer, and further, as he states in the preface, Shostakovich reviewed the text before publication. With this in mind, it would seem that Mr. Martynov's appraisal is concurred in by the composer. For a fuller understanding of Shostakovich's music, under the composer's guidance, this book is of especial value.

Mr. Martynov continually impresses us with the fact that Shostakovich is a true Soviet composer and glosses over the period following *Pravda's* denunciation of the composer's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, which oc-

curred in 1936. You will recall that Shostakovich was more or less out of favor with the powers that be, until his Piano Quintet was given its first performance in 1940 at the Moscow Festival and won the Stalin Prize of one hundred thousand rubles. Martynov states that Shostakovich did not change his style to suit the Soviet authorities but that his style was already changing before the *Pravda* diatribe. He writes, "The articles of *Pravda* did not serve as the external impulse which changed his art, but rather accelerated that process which had already begun in the depths of his consciousness."

Only occasionally does Soviet propaganda slip into Martynov's text, certainly not enough to seriously influence the reader, thus we do not hesitate to recommend this book. Shostakovich has so well established himself as a composer of real merit that such a book as the present one is worthy of the attention of all serious music lovers.

* * *

On September first Columbia announced an increase in the prices of its records. Columbia records that formerly sold for 60¢ are now 75¢; those that were 75¢ are now \$1; and those that were \$1 are \$1.25. The advanced prices include the tax. As numerous independent record publishers are quoting their retail prices with tax included, we are changing the prices in THE NEW RECORDS so that they will all include the tax. Beginning with this issue, in ordering records, it will not be necessary to add 5% to the prices quoted in this bulletin.

* * *

Columbia has recently announced that it will discontinue making its album sets in manual sequence, as the call for them is so small that it does not pay to make them. Record

buyers who prefer manual sets might do well to check the stocks of their dealers, as when the dealers' supply of these is exhausted there will be no more.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 130 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



A Wagner Program. *Siegfried Idyll* (four sides) and *A Faust Overture* (three sides) and *Die Walküre*—Ride of the Valkyries (Act III). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1135. \$5.10.

The highlight of this set is *A Faust Overture*, which shows Toscanini at his finest. His ability to make second-rate music sound impressive is well demonstrated in this instance, for his dramatic fervor, dynamic sense, and general shaping of this score is a masterpiece. This early work of Wagner is curiously interesting, and it was a happy thought to include it in the present album. A previous recording by Beecham is by no means eclipsed by the new Toscanini version, for Beecham's (Col. MX-63) is dramatic and precise and entirely praiseworthy.

The *Siegfried Idyll* has been discussed at length before in these pages. The most recent performance before this one was the Rodzinski—New York Philharmonic set (Col. MX-265), the most cherishable ones ever recorded were the several by Bruno Walter, and the most remarkable performance was an early recording by Karl Muck. Toscanini's first recording of the *Siegfried Idyll* was with the New York Philharmonic (in Vic. DM-308) and as this set is currently in the catalog it seems a pity he had to duplicate it. The present edition is of course a finer reproduction. Toscanini plays the work with a great deal of subtlety and restraint which does not especially benefit its repetitious nature.

The *Ride of the Valkyries* is also available this month as the filler in a Decca set, reviewed elsewhere, and we were surprised to find that a side by side playing of each showed de Sabata to be a better ringmaster than Toscanini in putting this warhorse through its paces. Toscanini does the notes with

deadly precision but de Sabata manages to squeeze a little more music out of it.

For insatiable Toscanini enthusiasts this set is probably a "must" item; for the rest of the collectors it is something to investigate before purchasing. S.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 3, Op. 35 "The Bells." Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich, with the Choir of the First Methodist Church of Hollywood and soloists. 4-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 804. \$6.15.

When it comes to first recordings and releases of unfamiliar music, the Santa Monica Symphony is in there pitching. This time they have scored another home run. They and Disc deserve hearty congratulations, for a recording of *The Bells* is a highly desirable addition to the catalogs. What is more, this performance should amply satisfy those who wish to own the work. Rachmilovich is indeed a conductor to be admired, and his orchestra is a competent organization. For this recording the orchestra was augmented to ninety-six pieces, and the assisting artists are: Carmen Prietto (soprano), Breece Westmoreland (tenor), Stephen Kemalyan (baritone), and the choir of the First Methodist Church of Hollywood directed by Norman Soreng Wright. The choir numbers seventy-two voices and sings its part expertly; their director, Mr. Wright, is a well-schooled musician with a vast musical background. We had the pleasure of meeting him and visiting the magnificent Hollywood church where he is organist.

The Bells is commonly called a symphony, and from the standpoint of having four movements and a somewhat symphonic form it is in a sense a symphony. Actually it is a composition for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, based on the poem by Edgar Allan Poe. Grove's Dictionary lists it under his vocal works, although the Grove's American Supplement of 1944 lists it as *Symphony No. 3, Op. 35 "The Bells"* (1912). The music itself is rather typical of Rachmaninoff, and provides easy listening even at the first hearing. Rachmilovich gives the work a vital and scintillating reading—interest and motion throughout without any dull spots. The vocal parts are sung in English, and the text is easily understandable to anyone familiar with the poem.

The reproduction of this set, if not ideal, is very good and distinct; surfaces are not too quiet. Taken all in all, it is a notable effort and deserves high commendation. We believe it will enjoy a wide popularity, even exceeding the Santa Monica recording of Khatchaturian's *Masquerade Suite*. S.

Gould: Minstrel Show. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (V-11-9654). \$1.05.

The dynamic Mitropoulos has recently signed an exclusive contract to record for RCA Victor and his

first disc appears this month. Why he chose the noisy *Minstrel Show* of Morton Gould for his debut under a new banner, we wouldn't know, unless he felt that he wanted to wake up the customers and come marching down Main Street at the head of a minstrel parade. This is the sort of selection that should have been reserved for the Boston "Pops." It's a lively piece and just about as American as chewing gum. Mitropoulos certainly gives it a whirl and the Minneapolis players follow him in a spirited performance. The reproduction is top-notch.

Holst: The Perfect Fool—Ballet Music. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Three sides, and **Wagner: Die Walküre**—Ride of the Valkyries. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-31. \$5.25.

The distinguished English composer Gustav Holst, of Swedish descent, was a master of several styles of composition. His church music is highly respected by choirmasters indulging in better types of choral music. His works for voice, orchestra, band, and other mediums show a fine technique, and his ideas and inspirations prove equally as interesting as his style.

Holst tried his hand with a comic opera, *The Perfect Fool*, written, of course, in English. Its lack of performances today and its lack of numerous recordings can hardly condemn it when one realizes that probably only one-fifth of all worth while and presentable operas are actually performed. The merits of *The Perfect Fool* must remain unknown to us, save for these brief ballet excerpts. The dances which comprise the ballet all occur right at the beginning of the opera, concerned as they are with the Spirits called from the vasty deep (according to the accompanying notes). The various sections are labeled: Introduction and Dance of the Spirits of Earth, Dance of the Spirits of Water, and Dance of the Spirits of Fire.

The music is not of world-shaking importance, but it is rather intriguing and we enjoyed it thoroughly. Sargent gives a convincing account of the score and the reproduction is typical *ffrr*. Those who know Holst will welcome this work; others better look before they leap. *The Ride of the Valkyries* being Wagner's least acceptable work in our opinion, we can offer little comment on this set's filler, except to say that de Sabata indulges in no tricks or stunts and plays the music as written, with a very marked sense of rhythm. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Russian Easter Overture, Op. 36. The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-28. \$5.25.

Until recently, Stokowski had the field to himself with two recordings for RCA Victor of this work.

This past spring, Columbia issued a set by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The present set from English Decca rounds out the field nicely and also offers a unique interpretation by the capable Spaniard, Jorda. Jorda's reading is not as highly dramatic as Stokowski's, but Jorda has a very controlled hand with orchestral color and balance. The first record side is a study in carefully adjusted dynamics—beautifully played and superbly reproduced. Jorda does not inflate the climax at the end of the work, he maintains the tempo and generates quite a bit of excitement by this treatment.

Those who are fond of *ffrr* recording will revel in the clarity of this set. The generous use of percussion in the score, particularly the bells, and Jorda's subtle shadings, all show off the *ffrr* reproduction to fine advantage. We would advise anyone interested in adding this work to his collection to give the Jorda interpretation a hearing before deciding between the three versions: Stokowski, Ormandy, or Jorda. They are all quite different from each other, and they offer a reading for every musical taste. If you can't hear all three and want our advice—take the Jorda one, if for nothing more than the remarkable reproduction. S.

Beecham Favorites. Borodin: Prince Igor—Overture. Three sides, and **Berlioz: The Trojans**—Royal Hunt and Storm, and Trojan March. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1141. \$4.05.

We don't know why this album is called "Beecham Favorites." We didn't know that Borodin and Berlioz were especial favorites of Sir Thomas. We do know that he has a great affinity for Mozart and has recorded many of that composer's symphonies, and that he has a real fondness for the music of Handel and Delius. It couldn't be that the title of this album was the idea of a copy writer in the advertising department of RCA Victor, could it?

All fun aside, the present discs are mighty welcome. Previous recordings of this music are old ones and modern versions are needed. As usual, Sir Thomas turns in performances that are the acme of refinement. He shows a thorough understanding of the music before him and brings out every detail with pristine clearness. It is as if the music were woven into a lace handkerchief which Sir Thomas holds up to the light so that all might see its beauty.

The English recorders have done an excellent job throughout.

Dukas: The Sorcerer's Apprentice. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12584D). \$1.25.

Another recording of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*! Toscanini, Stokowski, Mitropoulos and other lesser conductors have each made a recording of it. It is

gay pleasing music which practically plays itself and so the conductor is not so important. Your dealer is bound to have at least one version in stock, and it would seem to us, that which version it is, is not too important. Ormandy takes it at a fast clip and gets it all on two sides of one disc. Columbia has been very successful with the reproduction in the present instance.

Rawsthorne: Symphonic Studies (1939). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 3-12" discs (V-C-3542 to V-C-3544) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-C-7655 to V-C-7657). \$5.99.

Alan Rawsthorne, whose "Street Corner" Overture was reviewed in the April 1947 issue of this bulletin, is represented this month by a work of a more serious nature. We would hardly say profound, although the British Council seems to think that it is of sufficient importance to warrant its blessing and financial aid. It has been given a splendid and spirited performance by the Philharmonia Orchestra under the sympathetic direction of Constant Lambert.

It was composed in 1938 and was dedicated to John Ireland. We can see no special significance in its dedication. It is modern in its general character but not written in the wild mood of some of the present-day composers. It is quite sane, and we are of the opinion that if we had time to play it through several times, it would doubtless reveal much that is not apparent at the first hearing. We recommend it to those inquiring music lovers who like to investigate and study music that is new to them.

Bach—trans. Stokowski: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Leopold Stokowski and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9653). \$1.05.

Stokowski just loves to make recordings of his brilliant transcription of this famous Bach selection. This is his fourth recorded version: he has already recorded it twice with the Philadelphia Orchestra and once with the All-American Orchestra. Can't be that he had the royalty checks in mind when he made it with this unknown band? In any case, it's a grand record and is bound to enjoy a wide sale.

Rossini: William Tell—Passo a sei. One side, and **Rossini: William Tell—Little March of the Shepherds and Dance.** Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome conducted by Tullio Serafin. 1-12" disc (V-C-3559). \$2.

This music is of course dated, but if considered in its period, it is quite refreshing—two more selections from a work which is only known to most of us for its Overture. It is interesting to note that our old friend Tullio Serafin is directing the orchestra in this recording. He does a very pleasing job and the reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 9 in E flat (Carnival at Pesh). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9652). \$1.05.

This is the first domestic recording of the orchestral version of this piece. It is a natural for the Boston "Pops" and they make the best of their fine opportunity to show their virtuosity. It makes grand listening and Victor has achieved an excellent recording.

CONCERTO



Delius: Piano Concerto. Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 3-12" discs in album (V-CS-7648, V-C-7649 and V-C-7650—automatic sequence). \$4.99.

This is the first recording of the Delius Piano Concerto; these imported discs arrived recently from England. It is played by the world renowned pianist Moiseiwitsch who is scheduled to appear in this country later this year.

Judging by the enthusiastic reception accorded the recent release of the Delius Violin Concerto, the Piano Concerto should enjoy quite a vogue. In addition to the Delius fans, it should soon pick up another and even larger group—those who like a rollicking good piano concerto of the Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Grieg, or Rachmaninoff type. Yes, hard as it may be to imagine such a thing, Delius cut loose in this work with a palette that owes much to the style of Liszt. In a word, this sounds like the typical idea of a piano concerto, rather than like the prevalent opinion of delicate Delius. Moiseiwitsch sails through this performance in the grand manner, turns in some delicious pianism; Lambert and the Orchestra are with him to the end, and the reproduction serves it to you realistically.

The work is in one movement which is noticeably in three sections. It was originally conceived in three separate movements and was later reduced to the one-movement form when the revised version appeared in 1907. It is not Delius, the master, of *Appalachia*, for this concerto is an early work. It is not even like Delius of the *Violin Concerto*. But it is Delius that a lot of people are going to suddenly discover they can "take." This recording could even be the start of a newly found popularity—we hope it is. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 15 in B flat, K.450. Kathleen Long (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-25. \$7.35.

There has been an unusual demand for this particular set, and now that it is available (in standard size records, as all *ffrr* sets now are) there

should be a large number of happy owners. We have here a performance that will satisfy all those who take their Mozart seriously. It is a lively and sparkling reading, but the emphasis is on musicianship and not showmanship. Neel is a conductor noted for purity of style rather than electrifying effects, and he always remains within the framework of the composer's style. His direction of the orchestra reveals the niceties and subtleties of the score and the *ffrr* reproduction is clear and well balanced. Kathleen Long plays with a full realization of the grace, wit, and contrast of this lovely concerto. Her technique is easily able to cope with the difficulty born of simplicity that characterizes so much of Mozart's writing.

This concerto in B flat (Mozart wrote four in this key) was one of half a dozen which Mozart, in modern parlance, "knocked off" in 1784. The great ambition of his life, to compose a *serious* opera, had obsessed him for some time. This would have been a big job and, as housekeeping money had to be provided, the group of concertos "which at the moment are bringing in cash but will not do so later on," as Mozart told his father, was embarked on.

The booklet of program notes accompanying this album is very interesting, and the Britisher who penned the analytical notes for the three movements of the work has turned in a clever job. In every respect this is a fine set. There is no other recording available; a very early electric one by Elly Ney released by Victor as M-365 (now withdrawn) could not match this version. S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B flat, Op. 19. William Kapell (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Seven sides, and **Brahms: Intermezzo in E, Op. 116, No. 6.** William Kapell (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1132. \$5.10.

It has been at least ten years since we have had a new recording of this work and now two new versions are issued—the one listed above and a new recording by Artur Schnabel and Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. The latter was recently released in England and as far as we know no copies of it have as yet reached this country.

We rather imagine that Kapell gives a more poetic rendition with a lighter touch than Schnabel. One English reviewer says that, "Schnabel goes ahead and gives us the plain facts." We think that most of our readers will know what he means, therefore, if you would prefer the more orthodox Schnabel reading, you had better wait for the English recording. If you would like one a little more spirited and just a bit more gay, then the one that is presently available will be more to your taste. The RCA Victor reproduction is excellent.

Probably the Concerto No. 2, which is really the first in order of composition, is not too well known,

but it is an entirely worth while item. We realize that it is immature Beethoven, having been written when the composer was only twenty-four years of age, and that it leans strongly toward Mozart, but to us it gives more than a hint of the great composer to come, and, therefore, for us, it holds an unusual charm. If it is not in your library, we urge you to at least hear the present recording of it. R.

Elgar: Concerto in E minor, Op. 85. Pau Casals (violoncello) with the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 4-12" discs (V-DB-6338 to V-DBS-6341) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-DBS-9043 to V-DB-9046). \$9.19.

This concerto has never quite caught on here in America; although, judging from the number of recordings of it that have been released, it must have a distinct appeal to English music lovers. The present recording is the third that we know of. The two earlier ones were played by Beatrice Harrison and the New Symphony and W. H. Squire and the Hallé Orchestra. If memory serves us correctly the present version is far superior to the former ones.

It is not likely that this recording will be repressed in America because of the apparent little demand for it. However, it is one of Elgar's mature works and we personally feel that it has much to recommend it. It abounds in lovely melodies of a rather somber character. The soloist plays nearly the whole time with only short orchestral interruptions; just enough of these to break the monotony that might obtain without them.

Pau Casals seems to have an affinity for this concerto and gives a most sympathetic rendition. He is ably supported by the B. B. C. Symphony under the distinguished direction of Sir Adrian Boult. The best of HMV reproduction is in evidence.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Artur Schnabel (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 4-12" discs in album (V-DB-9032 to V-DB-9035—automatic sequence). \$10.50.

This is the third recording that Schnabel has made of this "best of all classical concertos," as W. R. A. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) is pleased to call this superb work. About fifteen years ago he made it with the London Symphony under Malcolm Sargent. Shortly before Frederick Stock died, he recorded it with the Chicago Symphony under the direction of that beloved gentleman of music. Schnabel, who as most music lovers know is a very fussy person, was not entirely satisfied with either of these versions and has for some years been anxious to make a really definitive recording. It is reported, that in the present version, he feels that he has accomplished his aim. In any case, when this set of discs was released in England last fall, it received

the highest praise from the English critics.

In our opinion, this great work has been superbly performed and splendidly recorded, and this album deserves an honored place in any record library.

Bach: Concerto in D minor for Two Violins and Orchestra. Jascha Heifetz, playing both solo parts, with the RCA Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Waxman. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1136. \$3.

Victor in announcing this recording says that it is not a stunt but that as it is very difficult to obtain "a truly unified musical interpretation on the part of the soloists," it was arranged technically for Heifetz to play both parts. We presume that a recording was made with the orchestra with Heifetz playing the first violin part and then the second violin part was dubbed on afterwards. From a technical standpoint it has been successfully accomplished. If the label did not so state, the listener would think that two great violinists were making the recording.

We cannot explain why, but for ourselves we would have preferred two artists, whether or not they matched perfectly in their musical interpretation. We recall the Kreisler and Zimbalist very early recording of this work and the later one by Menuhin and Enesco.

Many persons like novelties, if you are one of them, here is a real novelty.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Britten: String Quartet No. 2 in C, Op. 3. Zorian String Quartet. Seven sides, and **Purcell: Fantasia Upon One Note.** Zorian String Quartet and Benjamin Britten (viola). 4-12" discs (V-C-3536 to V-C-3539) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7651 to V-C-7654). \$7.98.

This string quartet, the second work in this form of the English composer, Benjamin Britten, is not one that one can take to easily. Britten does not write ingratiatingly; he seems always to be thinking of the work itself rather than the listeners, especially the casual listeners. This album will only be of interest to serious students, particularly those who are willing to make the effort to appreciate it. It will take more than one or two hearings to appraise it, and it would not surprise this writer, if many persons would eventually find that it was not quite worth the effort.

It would seem that the performance, which was under the personal supervision of the composer, is an excellent one. The Zorian String Quartet, which by the way is composed of very talented young women, is an organization which is new to us. We would very much like to hear them record something with which we are familiar. As far as we know

this is the first recording by a female string quartet.

We found the Purcell *Fantasia Upon One Note*, which fills the odd side of this set, as charming a little selection as we have heard in many a long year. It is superbly played. R.

Debussy: Sonata No. 2 for Flute, Viola, and Harp. Laura Newell (harp), Milton Katims (viola), and John Wummer (flute). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-282. \$3.35.

Debussy, in his later years, planned "Six Sonates pour divers instruments, par Claude Debussy, musicien français," and in these he wanted to offer tribute to the French composers of the 17th and 18th centuries and establish his kinship with them. Unfortunately, he died before he could complete the set, but a Sonata for 'Cello and Piano (1915), this Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp (1915) and a Sonata for Violin and Piano (1916-17) were completed and published. All of them have been recorded.

The present work, with its clarity and delicacy and its nicely balanced design, is full of felicitous touches. It is in three movements—Pastorale, Interlude and Finale. The melodies are poignant and appealing, and the effect is one of understatement and suggestion rather than that of the full, resounding German sentences from which he sought to escape. Those accustomed only to the latter will find this Debussy work unsatisfying and disquieting. But its delicately-cut charm is unescapable to those familiar with Debussy's mode of expression.

The present performers are well suited to their task and a sensitive and competent rendition has been accomplished. The earlier recordings of this work are very old and do not compare with this modern version in the field of reproduction.

Barók: Quartet No. 5. Hungarian Quartet. 4-12" discs (V-C-3511 to V-C-3514) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-C-7641 to V-C-7644). \$7.98.

It is pretty well established that the best of Barók will be found in his string quartets, and it has further been established that he is a composer of real importance, one whose impress on the musical scene of his lifetime will not quickly fade. It is therefore important that all serious students make it a point to investigate these quartets and there is certainly no better or easier way than by a study of the available recordings. Therefore, the present album is of real value, and HMV is to be thanked for making such a splendid version of the *Quartet No. 5* accessible.

This work dates from 1934 and was featured at the festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music at Barcelona in 1936. It is not easy to comprehend simply by listening to it, but if one will take the trouble to follow it with the score, much of great beauty and rare technical skill will im-

diately become apparent. We do not mean that this is music to be enjoyed from the printed page; it is not, but the printed page is a great aid to its full appreciation. We are sure that the effort made to understand this music will have its abundant reward. R.

Poulenc: Sonata. George Mager (trumpet), Jacob Raichman (trombone), and Willem Valkenier (French horn). 1-12" disc (Night Music NM-103). \$2.10.

Early in his career, the French composer Francis Poulenc (1899-) was much interested in writing for wind instruments; in more recent years his output has been mostly pieces for the piano. The present selection, which dates from 1922, is totally unknown to us. We never heard it before, and if it were not for this disc, we probably would never have become acquainted with it. Small loss, some may say, but persons interested in wind instruments will very likely find it quite fascinating, and will be particularly pleased that this record has been made available, because it is only through recordings that they can hear and study such music. Music of this character is very seldom heard on the concert platform and rarely broadcast over the radio, thus records again show their unique worth in the broad musical scheme.

OPERA



Berg: Wozzeck—excerpts. Charlotte Boerner (soprano) with the Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 2-12" discs in album. Artist Records Set JS-12. \$3.15.

Ever since Alban Berg's modern opera *Wozzeck* was produced in Berlin in 1925 under the direction of Erich Kleiber, and more especially after the performances in Philadelphia and New York under the direction of Leopold Stokowski, there has been a small but insistent demand for recordings of excerpts from it. A complete recording would be a little too much for even the most ardent *Wozzeck* fan. The opera as a whole requires scenery and the action of living characters for a full appreciation of its dramatic and musical value. Thus the present album fills a small but long felt want. Charlotte Boerner, who sings several of Marie's, the heroine, (if the opera has a heroine) arias, seems to have a full appreciation of the dramatic elements in the text and makes that unusual character seem very lifelike. Werner Janssen handles the orchestral score with great finesse and produces a performance that should satisfy even the most critical. We certainly hope that the major companies will not immediately make some *Wozzeck* recordings because of the success that this album may seem to have. There is a very limited market for such music and the present album will take care of the demand there is very nicely.

Romantic Arias from French Operas. (Sung in French). Raoul Jobin (tenor) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Wilfred Pelletier. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-696. \$4.60.

Meyerbeer: L'Africaine—O Paradis (Act IV). One side, and **Berlioz: Damnation of Faust**—Invocation to Nature (Act IV). (C-72138D).

Massenet: Herodiade—Jean's Air (Act IV). One side, and **Massenet: Werther**—Ossian's Song (Act III). (C-72139D).

Gounod: Romeo and Juliet—Cavatina (Act II). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—Ah! fuyez, douce image (Act III). (C-72140D).

In this album one is given a fine opportunity of hearing the Canadian tenor, Raoul Jobin, in a wide series of roles. He handles all of these arias nicely and most music lovers will doubtless concede that Mr. Jobin is a lyric tenor of real merit, with a pleasing voice that he uses most artistically. In these recordings he has the benefit of excellent orchestral support under the able direction of Wilfred Pelletier. Splendid reproduction is an added feature.

Mr. Jobin was born in Quebec where he began his musical studies. Later he continued his studies in Paris, where he made his professional debut as Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* in 1930 at the Paris Opera. He made his very successful debut with the Metropolitan in 1940 as Des Grieux in *Manon*.

Dvorák: Mein lied ertönt, Op. 55, No. 1. One side, and **Dvorák: Als die alte Mutter**, Op. 55, No. 4. (Sung in German). Margherita Perras (soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-10" disc (V-DA-4419). \$1.95.

Margherita Perras, whose lovely voice is known in America largely through her recordings, has recorded two selections from Dvorák's *Gypsy Songs*, Op. 55. No. 4 is the familiar *Songs My Mother Taught Me*. Both are sung in German, and Miss Perras has the fine support of the Berlin State Opera Orchestra under the sympathetic direction of Bruno Seidler-Winkler. This disc was recorded a number of years ago and has not, until recently, been available in this country since it was first released.

Puccini: La Bohème—Si, mi chiamano Mimi (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—Addio del passato (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Margherita Carosio (soprano) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Franco Patanè. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6343). \$2.63.

Margherita Carosio attained an outstanding success with the San Carlo Opera Company at Covent Garden last year and HMV engaged her to make some recordings. The present disc is the first of the

group to reach America. Unquestionably Miss Carosio is an artist of experience with an excellent voice and we are sure that collectors of operatic records will be greatly interested in this disc. The reproduction has been nicely accomplished.

Gluck: Orphee et Eurydice—Eurydice, Eurydice (recit. and aria) (Act I). One side, and **Gluck: Orphee et Eurydice**—J'ai perdu mon Eurydice (Act III). (Sung in German). Margarete Klose (contralto) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4531). \$2.63.

Gluck: Alceste—Ihr Götter ew'ger Nacht (Act I) (Sung in German). One side, and **Gluck: Paride ed Elena**—O del mio dolce ardor (Act I) (Sung in Italian). Margarete Klose (contralto) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4532). \$2.63.

At last we are receiving from England some of the fine operatic records for which the HMV catalog was famous before the war. The recordings of these four Gluck arias by Margarete Klose are some of these outstanding discs. Collectors of operatic recordings in this country will be glad to know that they are again available.

VIOLIN



Suk: Four Pieces, Op. 17. Ginette Neveu (violin) with piano accompaniments by Jean Neveu. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6359 and V-DB-6360). \$5.25.

Seldom does A. R. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) wax as enthusiastic as he did in his review of this pair of discs. He said:

"..... This music is tuneful, fresh, and expressive and it is played by the Neveu sister and brother with a fire and a brilliance, backed up by magnificent recording, which make this issue by far the most exciting thing that has come my way this month.

"The third number, based on a theme that resembles the Volga boatman's song, is the most beautiful, and the last, a sort of *motu perpetuo*, the most brilliant, but every one of the pieces has its attractions.

"With an excellent balance between violin and piano, and recording of the most realistic kind, I prophesy that these superb performances will make the sensation which they deserve."

If this recording completely satisfies A. R., and it would seem that it does from the above quotation, we are pretty sure that it will satisfy our readers who are interested in music of this character, and so we thus recommend.

Just in case you may have forgotten, Josef Suk was a pupil and son-in-law of Dvorák. Very little of his rather large output has been recorded.

PIANO



Schumann: Humoreske in B flat, Op. 20. Paul Loyonnet (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AI. \$7.20.

Much of Schumann's piano music has been recorded but this lovely selection has been skipped until Paul Loyonnet made the present recording. It is seldom heard on the concert platform; in fact, it has been so long since we heard it that we had quite forgotten it. As we listened to these discs, we could not help wondering why it is not more popular. It is truly characteristic of Schumann with its gay moments and its underlying sense of gravity. It is just the sort of piece that anyone who is fond of lovely music for the pianoforte may enjoy at first hearing and yet will not tire of after repeated playing—it has much in it that is worthy of deep consideration.

Since Paul Loyonnet's first very successful recital in New York last autumn, many music lovers have expressed a desire for a recording by this talented artist. The present one will probably be most acceptable. Mr. Loyonnet was born in Paris in 1892. At the age of sixteen he began his career as a concert pianist. In 1932, at the age of forty with an American tour all planned for him, he suddenly retired from the concert stage and devoted himself to the study of philosophy. His book on the philosophy of Beethoven is a result of this period. After the Germans had invaded his country during World War II, he was persuaded to return to his former profession and he gave many concerts in the unoccupied section of France. When the war ended, he returned to Paris where he was enthusiastically received by large audiences. His first visit to the United States occurred in 1946.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). Five sides, and **Beethoven: Rondo in C, Op. 51, No. 1.** Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7560 to V-C-7562—automatic sequence). \$5.99.

Ever since this recording was released in England collectors on this side of the Atlantic have been anxiously awaiting its arrival in this country. It is here, and we must say that it lives up to the high praise that it received from the English critics. Moiseiwitsch gives a sterling performance and the reproduction of the piano has been faithfully accomplished.

Schnabel and Gieseeking have both made recordings of this famous Beethoven sonata but neither of them are readily available. The Schnabel version may not be had separately; it is included in Vol. IX of the Beethoven Sonata Society. The Gieseeking recording, while still in the Columbia catalog, is not generally available. Columbia has sort of forgotten the Gieseeking records in the last few years.

If this outstanding work for piano is not in your library, you may select the present recording by Moiseiwitsch with the feeling that you have added a very worth while item to your collection.

Liszt: Un Sospiro. One side, and **Schumann: Aufschwung, Op. 12, No. 2.** Ania Dorfmann (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9672). \$1.05.

This disc has a direct movie tie-in. Miss Dorfmann plays these two selections for Barbara Stanwyck in the film "The Other Love." Those persons who have enjoyed the picture will have an especial interest in this record and music lovers generally will find this disc contains some lovely music beautifully played by a most talented artist and splendidly reproduced by RCA Victor.

CHORAL



Roman Vatican Singers. Roman Singers of Sacred Music from the Roman Vatican Choirs conducted by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Licino Refice. 3-10" discs in album. Seva Set No. 18. \$4.20.

This choir is made up of 54 men and boys from the choirs of the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's, St. John's Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore. For the first time in its distinguished history, blessings and permission have been granted by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII to this sacred group of choristers to embark on a journey which carries them beyond the confines of Vatican City. Recently this choir arrived in the United States where a series of nearly a hundred concerts has been arranged in the larger cities. Its conductor is the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Licino Refice, who is director of capella music of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and the professor superior of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in the Vatican City. Monsignor Refice, in addition to being a teacher and conductor is a prolific composer. Among his works are: ten oratorios, two operas, thirteen masses and many other religious compositions.

The selections chosen for this album begin with *Acclamationes* (a salute to the American Peoples composed by Monsignor Refice), and then we have the following: *Tu es Petrus* (Refice); *Ave Maria* (Vittoria); *Jubilate Deo* (Lasso); and *Regina Coeli* (Palestrina).

There is no question about the quality of this singing and we are happy to report that the recording has been successfully accomplished and the record surfaces are satisfactory.

Adam: The Holy City. The Kentucky Minstrels conducted by Leslie Woodgate with organ accompaniment by Reginald Foort. 1-10" disc (V-BD-546). \$1.42.

The Kentucky Minstrels is a male choral group

who have been making records for HMV for a number of years. They specialize in religious selections. Several years ago, some enterprising dealer who specializes in imported discs, secured a few copies of this record, and since that time there has been a demand for it in this country. Now that it is available again, we mention it for the benefit of those readers who are interested in sacred selections of this character.



ORGAN

Scheidt: Variations on Choral "Da Jesu an dem Kreuze stund." Finn Viderö playing the organ of Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5213). \$2.63.

This disc has two features that will be of prime interest to organists and students of that great instrument. In the first place this recording was made on a small organ with all wooden pipes built by Compennius in about 1627, and the music is that of Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654), said to be the best German organist of his time. Here is another example of a record bringing us music that most of us would never hear by any other means.



DICTION

Fletcher: Sorry, Wrong Number. Agnes Moorehead with supporting cast. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DAU-2. \$5.10.

The famous radio thriller "Sorry, Wrong Number" has been recorded by Decca with a very able cast headed by Agnes Moorehead. This recording was edited, produced, and directed by William Spier, whose "Suspense" series of broadcasts on CBS have been so successful.

Miss Moorehead makes the highly nervous Mrs. Stevenson a nerve tingling character and builds up the suspense of the plot very logically until the terrific climax is reached and the listener is left quite breathless. It's a thriller all right, and those who go in for such broadcasts will probably get quite a kick from this recording, and will likely enjoy turning out the lights and playing these discs for their friends. This album is not recommended for children.

Timeless Album of Enduring Inspiration. J. Carrol Naish (speaking) with organ background. 3-10" discs in album. United Artists Set No. 1. \$3.15.

This album contains a series of Bible readings spoken by J. Carrol Naish with original music by Eddison von Ottenfeld. Mr. Naish speaks with reverence and deep feeling, but lack of variety tends to make these discs a bit monotonous. The musical

background is appropriate and unobtrusive. The recording is satisfactory and the record surfaces smooth.

The readings in this album are as follows: *The Last Supper*; *The Lord's Prayer*; *Sermon on the Mount*; *23rd Psalm*; and *91st Psalm*.



VOCAL

Strauss, Johann—arr. Benatzky: *Casanova*—Nonnenchor. Anni Frind (soprano) with orchestra and chorus of Grossen Schauspielhauses, Berlin, conducted by Ernst Hauke. (Sung in German). One side, and **Strauss, Johann**—arr. Benatzky: *Casanova*—Spanische Romanze. Orchestra of Grossen Schauspielhauses, Berlin, conducted by Ernst Hauke. 1-12" disc (V-EH-207). \$2.

Occasionally a recording appears that most everyone who hears it likes, and for no particular reason. Such a recording is the *Nonnenchor* (Nun's Chorus) from Johann Strauss' operetta "Casanova." We don't know why this selection seems to please everybody; we do know that it is a fact, for hundreds of copies of this record were imported before the war and always were quickly sold. Dealers report numerous requests for it and so we announce to our readers that it is presently available—large shipments of this disc have recently been received from England.

The instrumental selection from the same operetta on the reverse side of this disc also seems to have a rather universal appeal.

Sacred Arias of Johann Sebastian Bach. Carol Brice (contralto) with Columbia Broadcasting Concert Orchestra conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-283. \$3.35.

The gifted American contralto, Carol Brice, turns her attention to the immortal Bach this month and presents *Agnus Dei* and *Qui sedes* from the "Mass in B minor" and *Esurientes implevit bonis* and *Et exultavit* from "Magnificat." Miss Brice has a rich voice of fine quality with plenty of power which she uses with proper restraint. She has some way to go before she is a finished artist, but she is progressing nicely, as these discs will amply demonstrate. We hope Columbia will give her further opportunity to record because her records are well worth having.

Westendorf: I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen. One side, and *By the Old Turf Fire* (trad.). Christopher Lynch (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1316). 79c.

There are several better renditions of the ever-popular *I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen* than the present one. Mr. Lynch's voice sounds quite thin on this recording and lacks the warmth that a ballad such as this requires. He is much more successful with *By the Old Turf Fire*.

Sabbath Prayers. Cantor Jonah Binder (Tenor) and choir. 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 901. \$3.52.

This album contains a half-dozen traditional prayers of the service welcoming the Sabbath. They are beautifully and reverently sung by Cantor Binder and an adequate choir. For those who appreciate fine Jewish liturgical music, this album is highly recommended.

Cantor Binder was born on the lower East Side of Manhattan. As a boy he attended the Yeshiva and later became soloist in the choirs of such famous cantors as Rosenblatt and Herschman. He was recently released from the Navy, where he was the only cantor associated with the Chaplain's Department at the Naval Training Station, Sampson, N. Y.

Flamenco. Soledad Miralles (soprano) accompanied by Carlos Montoya (guitar). 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 721. \$3.94.

Soledad Miralles and Carlos Montoya are considered two of the leading exponents of Flamenco music, that music of the Gypsies from the Andalusian and Levantine provinces of Spain. In these selections Miss Miralles probably dances as well as sings, at least one hears the stamping of her feet and the clatter of her castanets. It all sounds quite authentic to us.

The blurb-sheet that accompanies these records states that: "Miss Miralles was a very famous artist in Spain and at one time in her life a professional bullfighter." There is a picture of a bull on the cover of this album—perhaps that's for remembrance.

Roll the Union On. Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, and other vocalists with instrumental accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Asch Set No. 370. \$3.94.

A group of songs that are said to be popular at union rallies and on the picket lines, sung by several singers who specialize in writing and singing such ditties. A folder giving the words of each song, and short biographical sketches of the various artists, is included with this album.

The selections are: *Listen, Mr. Bilbo*; *This Old World*; *Roll the Union On*; *Put It On the Ground*; *I'm A-Looking for a Home*; and *The Rankin Tree*.

Manci Kiraly. Manci Kiraly (mezzo-soprano) with Sándor and his Gypsy Orchestra. (Sung in Hungarian.) 3-10" discs in album. International Vol. 17. \$3.94.

Manci Kiraly, who is known for her successes at The Golden Fiddle in New York and the Cleveland Hungarian Operatic Theatre, has selected six Hungarian songs, that she has made more or less famous, for this unusual little album. Those who are interested in music of this character will doubtless find them quite fascinating. The surfaces of these discs are none too good; there is an occasional annoying crackle.

Music of the Americas. Alfredo Antonini and his Viva America Orchestra, with vocals by Elsa Miranda and Los Panchos Trio. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 115. \$4.99.

Gypsy Songs. Alex Shandor (violin) and Gypsy Orchestra with vocals by Anne Roselle and Louis Barson. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 123. \$4.99.

The above two items have been recently added to Pilotone's famous list of albums containing Vinylite (unbreakable) records.

The first, "Music of the Americas," contains a series of Latin-American pieces from Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala, Peru and Brazil. They are authentically interpreted by Maestro Antonini, conductor of Mutual's "Treasure House of Song" and CBS's "Viva America" program. Interesting vocals are supplied by the brilliant trio of singing guitarists, Los Panchos, and the Puerto Rican beauty, Elsa Miranda.

The second album contains a group of Gypsy songs by a Gypsy Orchestra featuring Alex Shandor and his magical violin. The vocals are by Anne Roselle of the Metropolitan and Louis Barson.

For those who are looking for music that is both gay and unusual, either or both of these albums may be highly recommended.

Songs of Trinidad. Calypso Songs composed and sung by Wilmoth Houdini, with Gerald Clark's Night Owls. 4-10" discs in album. Brunswick Set B-1023. \$3.94.

There seems to be a never-ending demand for new Calypso selections. We don't know why, because they all sound alike to us. However, this fellow Houdini is rated with the best in his field and so we suppose that this album will enjoy a substantial sale to Calypso fans. A booklet giving the words of each song is included with this album. We imagine this helps the sophisticated to understand the meaning of these ditties but it wasn't much help to us. We guess we're just plain dumb.

CHILDREN



Bozo at the Circus. Pinto Colvig (narrator) and cast, with sound effects and music directed by Billy May. 2-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BBX-34. \$2.84.

So many new records for the kiddies have arrived recently that if we listed them all we wouldn't have room for any recordings for the older folks. Therefore, we will just list the most important ones, and among that group we must give attention to this very clever little album released by Capitol. It contains two records, and bound in it, with pages the size of the album, is a forty-page book with twenty pages of pictures in full color. The text of the trip to the circus is interspersed with the pictures, and as the

little one listens to the records, Bozo blows his whistle from time to time to indicate when it is time to turn the page. By this means the smallest tot who cannot read can keep up with the story and see the picture that Bozo is telling about. It is all a lot of fun and the kiddies who are fortunate enough to receive one of these albums are in for many happy hours of rare amusement.

French Songs for Children. (Sung in French.) Sung by Enny de Vries, with piano and guitar accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. International Vol. 21. \$3.15.

There are so many young folks studying French that there is always a call for recordings of nice little French songs for children. The present album contains some lovely such discs pleasantly sung by Enny de Vries (soprano). The reproduction is very good but some of the surfaces are a bit gritty in spots.

Tick-Tock Tale. Storyland Theatre artists, with music composed and conducted by Paul Creston. 3-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-485. \$2.37.

Here is a little album for children that is likely to click with the younger folk. It contains a novel little story of a club that meets in a Swiss clock store during the night after the proprietor has gone home. The club is presided over by Grandfather Clock and the members include Al Alarmclock, Miss Diamond Watch, Miss Cuckoo Clock and others. The plot hinges on whether a little battered American Watch which has been left at the shop for repair is to be admitted to the club. It is all quite exciting and we rather believe that the kiddies will love it.

An able cast of players has been secured for this recording and the reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

It's Fun to Eat. Various artists with orchestra directed by Winston Sharples. 3-10" discs in album. Winant Set G-1. \$4.65.

A set of three records—one for breakfast, one for luncheon and one for supper! With clever little songs about each meal, the idea is to encourage little tots to eat nicely the things that are good for them and to be sure to wash their hands and faces before they come to the table. This album has been approved by Angelo Patri, America's best known authority on child behavior, and so we guess it must be all right.

These records are non-breakable so that little children may handle them themselves.

Peter Churchmouse. Paul Wing (narrator) with cast and Henri René and his orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set Y-329. \$3.15.

Another in RCA Victor's fine series of non-breakable records for children. *Peter Churchmouse* is a most amusing story with sound effects and music for youngsters from four to eight, nicely told by Paul Wing.

MISCELLANEOUS



Folk Music of the Central East. Native artists and instruments recorded on location. 3-10" discs in album. Disc set No. 132. \$4.73.

This album contains authentic examples of the folk music of Turkish-Armenia; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bukhar; Georgia; and Uzbekistan. The recordings were made in the respective states of the Central East by native musicians. The reproduction seems to have been successfully accomplished and the surfaces of the discs are satisfactory. If you are interested in music of this character, the present album is well worth investigation.

El Relicario (sung in Spanish). One side, and **Kashmiri Song** (sung in English). Rudolph Valentino. Recorded May, 1923. 1-10" disc (CRS-17). \$2.

Come Down Ma Evenin' Star. Lillian Russell. One side, and **Cissie (Marie) Loftus**—Imitation of Enrico Caruso singing an Italian song. Both privately recorded 1912. 1-10" disc (CRS-8A). \$2.

These discs are novelties. The great star of the silent screen, Rudolph Valentino, who quickened the hearts of so many maidens a score or so years ago, recorded these selections in 1923, when he was at the height of his popularity. Probably his many fans wished to hear his voice and his publicity man conceived the idea of having Mr. Valentino make these recordings.

The one and only Lillian Russell, the toast of the Gay Nineties, has recorded the ballad for which she is still remembered, and the great music hall artist, Cissie Loftus, gives her famous imitation of Caruso singing a Neapolitan song. For those who recall these artists this disc will have a definite appeal. Others will have little or no interest in it.

Songs We Remember. Various groups and artists, recorded in Spain. 2-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 720. \$2.89.

This pair of discs is released through Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, which was composed of Americans who fought against Franco in the Spanish War that preceded World War II. It would seem that they contain four traditional melodies that these men remember. The original recordings were made in Spain and the present discs were probably dubbed from copies of the records that these men brought back to this country. Milton Robertson, in an eloquent foreword which appears on the inside cover of this album, describes these selections in detail.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Haydn: A Creative Life in Music. By Karl Geiringer. Illustrated. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 8

OCTOBER 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

We cannot imagine anyone who is interested in records not being interested in this book. Charles O'Connell is known to the record buying public as an organist and a conductor but both of these activities are insignificant in comparison with his real job. He was with Victor for nearly twenty years, and from 1930 until his resignation on April 1, 1944 was Musical Director of that company. In that position he was responsible for nearly every Red Seal record made in America. It was his duty to engage all Red Seal Artists, negotiate recording contracts with them and their managers, choose the repertoire to be recorded by each, supervise musically all important Red Seal recordings, and in some cases conduct the orchestral accompaniments. We doubt if anyone has met and become intimately acquainted with more musical personalities in America during the last couple of decades than Mr. O'Connell. Fortunately he is a writer of brilliant prose. One of his first jobs with Victor was to write the booklets that accompanied the early album sets—many of us remember their brilliant and informative character. Later he wrote the *Victor Book of the Symphony* and edited several editions of *The Victor Book of the Opera*—two of the most popular musical books ever published.

So much for the author—now to the book itself! One might say that it is a series of essays, with essays within essays. For example, Mr. O'Connell's essay on the Organ and his essay on John Hays Hammond, Jr.'s home at Gloucester, Massachusetts, which are both included in his chapter headed "The Organists," are truly delightful. His book is just full of

such gems—bits of prose of which the most eminent writer might justly be proud. A chapter is devoted to each of some fifteen artists with whom Mr. O'Connell became acquainted during his twenty years with Victor. Among these outstanding musicians were Lily Pons, Eugene Ormandy, Lauritz Melchior, Toscanini, Flagstad, Rachmaninoff, Koussevitzky, Stokowski *et al.* Much that the author tells us of these artists is new, and much of it of a personal character, much is information that only Mr. O'Connell could know. However, he breaks no confidences and never stoops to cheapen his text with matter whose only value is the fact that it is sensational. Charles O'Connell is in no way a Walter Winchell.

His chapter on Toscanini is most illuminating. After one reads it, he feels that he really knows that most unusual of musical personalities. Of special interest to record collectors, is the author's account of the large number of recordings that Toscanini made with the Philadelphia Orchestra, which recordings were never released. Mr. O'Connell describes them in detail and tells why they never reached the public. *The Other Side of the Record* is full of just such information. Nearly every page has something of interest to the phonophile—recordings have been so much a part of Mr. O'Connell's life that they sort of form an axis around which everything else in his musical world revolves.

Because we are so interested in records, we may be overly enthusiastic about Mr. O'Connell's book; however, we are also interested in fine writing, and we have read over and over again sections of it that do not mention recordings, just for the thrill we get from reading brilliant prose. We have read and reviewed nearly every book of importance touching on records or recording artists that has been pub-

lished in the last ten years, but none of them has thrilled us as has *The Other Side of the Record*.

* * *

On October first RCA Victor announced a reduction in the price of Heritage Series recordings. Formerly \$3.68, they are now \$2.63. RCA Victor also announced an increase in the price of albums. Their 10" and 12" albums, formerly 75¢ and 85¢ respectively, are now both \$1. The Recordrama albums, and others with pages bound in, which were \$1 are now \$1.25. Albums of the "K" and "Y" series remain the same price, \$1. These album prices do not include the 5% tax, which should be added when computing the prices of complete album sets.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 130 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Britten: The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34 (Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell). Five sides, and **Bach—arr. Sargent. Suite No. 3 in D—Air.** Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-703. \$4.60.

Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell is the title by which anyone who hears this work will wish to remember it. The fact that this was a score composed for an educational film "Instruments of the Orchestra," does not make it movie music or any such compromising thing. It did, however, influence Britten in the style that he selected for such a task, and he chose the time honored method of theme and variations. In this case, each of the variations demonstrates the character and range of an instrument or group of instruments. There is more than one suggestion of humor in this superb essay. There is always a cleverly constructed variation which exploits the theme and the instruments used. And finally, there is a magnificent fugue, commencing its theme with a piccolo and adding instruments down the line in the same order as they appear in the vari-

ations, drawing to a thrilling climax as the brasses restate the original Purcell theme.

It is hard to realize that this charming and clever work, which anyone may easily enjoy, is from the pen of the same man whose *Second String Quartet* was reviewed in these columns last month. That work grows more annoying with every hearing; but this set of variations intrigues us more every time we play it. It must be that Britten is a versatile chap who can write in various mediums.

Sir Malcolm Sargent and the Liverpool Philharmonic give a rich and sonorous account of Britten's score and they are very well recorded. Sargent has provided a lovely and different type of transcription of the famous *Bach Air*. Strings in unison play against a moving background of soft dark wind instruments—the effect is lovely. And lest we forget, the set can be used for educational purposes, although we are sure many persons are going to enjoy it often, and not for academic reasons. S.

Bach: Suite No. 2 in B minor for Flute and Strings.

Sebastian Caratelli (flute) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. Five sides, and **Bach—orch. Cailliet: Fugue in G minor** ("Little"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-695. \$4.60.

The four Bach suites for orchestra have received a definitive recording by Busch (Vic. DM-332 and DM-339) which should discourage too many attempts at duplication. This past July, Victor issued Suites 2 and 3 by Koussevitzky, and while these columns found them tasteful, this reviewer found them terrible, at least as to style (the reproduction was good). Now we have Reiner in a new version of the second suite. We are happy to say that Reiner is more concerned with Bach than with effects, and this set far surpasses Koussevitzky for style. The tone of the soloist flutist is of a most agreeable quality and is especially appropriate to music of this character. Columbia has reproduced the Pittsburgh strings faithfully, and they are indeed worthy of good reproduction. No other conductor has recently done more to improve the quality of an orchestra than has Reiner, who lifted Pittsburgh from insignificance to first rank in a matter of several years (and precious few are more qualified than Reiner to do it). His thorough musicianship shines through every bar of this recording. The principal difference between this performance and Busch's, is in the size of the ensemble—Busch uses a smaller group.

Reiner's conception of the *Little G minor Fugue* parallels the performances of our better organists, and avoids the distortions common to orchestral performances. It is clear and precise and does justice to this clever little work. Here is an album where everyone concerned fares well, including Bach.

S.

X
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletski. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-701. \$8.35.

Not that another *Fifth* (by any composer) is needed, but here it is and it turns out to be the best yet from many angles. Kletski is new to us, except that we read about him in *The Gramophone* (London) when this set was reviewed and appraised highly. He begins the work leisurely and sets the sombre mood very well. When the agitated parts arrive he does not lose himself in the excitement, but carefully builds the work up to a fine climax. The second movement is nicely done throughout, as is the third also. The fourth movement finds Kletski in a far saner frame of mind than Koussevitzky, who practically tore the score to pieces in his recent set (Vic. DM-1057). Kletski is assisted by excellent reproduction in building some staggering climaxes. You can't go wrong on this set. In the concert hall we have heard more dramatic performances by Stokowski, Sevitzy, Sebastian, and others. Of the recorded versions, Mengelberg had quite a thriller, although he did a preposterous job of cutting in it. Other recordings of merit include Ormandy (Vic. DM-828) and Beecham (Col. MM-470) (the sane approach).

It may have been the Kletski touch or it may have been the fact that we had not heard the Tchaikovsky *Fifth* for a long time, but we thoroughly enjoyed the experience. In this day, when it is the thing to malign Tchaikovsky and hand him to Tin Pan Alley for the "treatment," a good performance of the *Fourth*, *Fifth*, or *Sixth Symphony* serves to remind us what beautifully fashioned works they are. Possibly the *Fifth*, such a great favorite the world over, deserves the many recordings it has received! S.

Bernstein: Facsimile (A Choreographic Essay). RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1142. \$3.15.

The brilliant young American conductor and composer, Leonard Bernstein, has written some mighty interesting music for his ballet—*Facsimile*—choreography by Jerome Robbins, who will be remembered for his choreography of *Fancy Free* and his scenario and dances for *On the Town*. *Facsimile* was first performed in the autumn of 1946 by the Ballet Theatre in New York. The music, in concert form, was first heard at a concert at Vassar College given by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra with the composer conducting.

The story of the ballet is given in detail on the inside cover of the album, and we strongly suggest that the listener carefully familiarize himself with the text before he plays these discs. Knowledge of the story will greatly aid in a fuller appreciation of Mr. Bernstein's music.

Of chief interest to us, was the amazing way in which the composer seems to have absorbed the neurotic spirit of each of the three characters in the ballet, and then to have reproduced them and their actions in his music. The story is very real in Mr. Bernstein's musical portrayal of it.

RCA Victor supplied the composer with an excellent orchestra for this recording and saw to it that fine reproduction was obtained.

Grofé: Mississippi Suite. Three sides, and **Cadman: From the Land of the Sky Blue Water and Lieurance: By the Waters of Minnetonka.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-284. \$3.35.

Ferde Grofé's *Mississippi Suite*, which Paul Whiteman made famous a number of years ago, is presented this month by Kostelanetz and his orchestra. We are happy to report that Kostelanetz keeps himself pretty well under control, and Mr. Grofé's music comes through without too much sugar coating. It is a bit labored at times however. The two tidbits that make up the fourth side of this pair of discs are sticky sweet.

Coates: The Three Bears—Suite. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 1-12" disc (C-72236D). \$1.25.

We don't believe that this one will stir up much excitement on this side of the Atlantic. Eric Coates writes pleasing enough light music but as plenty of such music is continually being written in this country, it is rather like "carrying coals to Newcastle" to release this recording over here.

Boieldieu: The Caliph of Baghdad—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. 1-12" disc (C-72237D). \$1.25.

There is a sizeable demand for such old-fashioned overtures as the present one. Columbia realizing this decided to make a domestic pressing of this English recording. The music is pleasing, even if it is definitely dated—the performance and the reproduction are excellent.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 61. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-697. \$7.10.

A comparison of this new set with the Heifetz-Toscanini version (Vic. DM-705) seems to be uppermost in everyone's mind. We do not hesitate to go on record as preferring the new Szigeti performance, for several reasons. First, it is immediately apparent that Szigeti and Walter approached their task with

the idea of creating some fine music; whereas we have always nursed the idea that Heifetz and Toscanini strode upon the stage bent on recording this work at the highest possible voltage in an effort to achieve near-perfection technically, and in the heat of the battle Beethoven was lost in the shuffle. Walter has a way with this score that imparts warmth and beauty without being slushy or lacking in strength. Szigeti is admittedly not the magnificent technician that Heifetz is; but his conception of the score from a musical standpoint is infinitely more valid than Heifetz's. Heifetz slashes or carves a perfect phrase and you are amazed—Szigeti forms or moulds the same phrase and you are warmed by the beauty of it.

A second reason for our distinct preference for the new set is the reproduction, which is notably finer than the earlier Heifetz set. The Heifetz set has the notorious 8-H acoustics, plus atrocious breaks at the end of record sides. In the present set, Columbia has achieved fine reproduction, although on anything less than a very high fidelity machine, the string tone is apt to sound a little thin.

Those who own the Heifetz-Toscanini set should not change it for this one, for they would probably never get used to it. Those who own the earlier Szigeti-Walter set (Col. MM-177), the Kreisler set, or any other, can easily replace it with this one to advantage; and those who have yet to introduce the Beethoven Violin Concerto to their library are, in our opinion, left with no choice but this set—a happy choice indeed. S.

Handel—arr. Casadesu: **Concerto in B minor for Viola and Orchestra**. William Primrose (viola) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissman. Five sides and **Kreisler: Praeludium and Allegro** (in the style of Pugnani). William Primrose (viola) with piano accompaniment by Franz Rupp. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1131. \$4.20.

In 1937, when Primrose made a recording of this concerto for English Columbia, it was announced that Henri Casadesu, the founder of the *Société des Instruments Anciens*, and himself, a viola player of repute, had found this Handel work. The original contained merely the melody and a sketchy figured bass, and from that M. Casadesu developed this completed work. Since that time many scholars, after much research, have stated that it is not a work of Handel's, with the inference that it is an original work of Casadesu in the style of the great master of the 18th century. No matter what this composition really is, it is a lovely work to listen to, and those music lovers who enjoy the music of the Handel period will certainly enjoy it greatly. Primrose gives a spirited performance and one that calls for the highest praise. In the present version he is supported by a much superior orchestra to the one that accompanies him in the earlier one and he also has the

advantage of the best of modern recording.

We enjoyed this album immensely and we are sure that many of our readers will find it a very attractive item.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E flat. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1144. \$3.15.

There have been several previous recordings of this "easy to listen to" selection, but we rather feel that the present one will be the choice of the vast majority of music lovers. The great popularity of Artur Rubinstein and the benefit of the latest modern reproduction will give the recording issued this month an advantage that the older sets will not be able to overcome. Mr. Rubinstein does a brilliant and also a most artistic job; the Dallas Symphony under Dorati gives adequate support.

This Concerto was first performed at Weimar on February 17, 1855, with Liszt himself at the piano and Berlioz, then giving a series of concerts in the town, conducting. In four movements played without a break, it begins with a pompous theme thundered out by the full orchestra. In the *allegretto vivace*, the third movement, the triangle is introduced, and for this Liszt was heartily berated by many critics, including the formidable Hanslick. The music is superficial but extremely brilliant and showy, and when played so splendidly as it is here makes an undeniable impression. R.

Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in E flat for Horn and Orchestra, K. 495. Dennis Brain (horn) with the Hallé Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-285. \$3.35.

Dennis Brain, the son of the famous British horn player, Aubrey Brain, gives a sparkling performance of this jolly little concerto for horn and orchestra. Mozart wrote four such concertos for his friend, companion, servant and clerk, Ignaz Leitzgeb, who was a noted horn player in the court orchestra at Salzburg. While these works are difficult enough for present-day players, they must have been almost impossible for players such as poor Leitzgeb, whose instruments were not equipped with valves and scientifically constructed tuning slides. It is said that Mozart, in a spirit of fun, wrote these pieces with his tongue in his cheek, but to his surprise Leitzgeb was able to play them and did so at many concerts. They are all delightful little compositions, and the present one, in the hands of the very accomplished artist, Dennis Brain, makes an item that may find a welcome place in any record library.

Released in England in August, 1943, Columbia is to be thanked for repressing this valuable addition to the Mozart recordings in this country. An encouraging acceptance of the present set will, we hope, inspire Columbia to repress the Mozart Horn Concerto No. 2, K. 417 which was just released in England in June.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Stravinsky: Dumbarton Oaks Concerto. Dumbarton Oaks Festival Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 2-12" discs in album. Keynote Set DM-1. \$3.63.

This concerto for chamber orchestra was completed in France in the spring of 1938. Its first performance was given on the thirtieth wedding anniversary of the Hon. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss at their estate "Dumbarton Oaks." Nadia Boulanger conducted this performance. The present recording was made in conjunction with another performance at Dumbarton Oaks in the spring of 1947 at which time the composer was the conductor.

Considerable interest has centered around this work, and persons interested in modern music, and Stravinsky in particular, have expressed a desire for a recording of it. Here it is, and Keynote claims, that through an improved technique, a higher fidelity has been achieved than has been possible up to this time. It is a very brilliant recording and on a fine reproducing instrument remarkable realism is evident.

Ingolf Dahl, who wrote the notes that accompany this album, describes this work very neatly when he says:

"The Dumbarton Oaks Concerto followed chronologically the composer's sparkling and light-hearted ballet 'Card Game' and preceded his monumental 'Symphony in C.' Both of these works are to some extent reflected in this Concerto. The ballet, in particular, was the parent of the delicate 'air de danse' of the Concerto's second movement. The symphony, on the other hand, is anticipated, thematically as well as structurally, in the Concerto's more richly textured outer movements."

This is not a recording for the general music loving public—it is particularly for those persons who know, and are interested in, Stravinsky and his musical development. It is interesting to note that shortly after Stravinsky made this recording, RCA Victor signed him as an exclusive artist.

Mozart: Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A, K. 581. Reginald Kell (clarinet) and the Philharmonia Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-702. \$5.85.

(This annotation is reprinted from the March 1947, issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed).

When this recording was released in England in May 1945, it was given the highest praise both for the performance and the reproduction. Some critics thought that it was a fine example of English chamber music recording at its best. Last year a few copies of it reached America and those collectors who were fortunate enough to secure one boasted of it to their

friends and thus there was created quite a demand for these discs in this country. A recent shipment from England contained copies in both manual and automatic sequence. This news will probably cause quite a stir among collectors of chamber music recordings.

The opus itself is well-known and is considered among Mozart's finest chamber works. Recordings of it have been made by Benny Goodman and the Budapest Quartet, Simon Bellison and the Roth Quartet, and Charles Draper and the Léner Quartet. We are familiar with all of these earlier versions and we do not hesitate to state that, in our opinion, the present recording far outshines all of them in both performance and reproduction. Here is a chamber music recording that rates with the very best. R.

Villa-Lobos: Quartet No. 6 in E (Quartetto Brasileiro No. 2). Stuyvesant String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. International Set No. 301. \$4.20.

While the Brazilian composer, Heitor Villa-Lobos, is a prolific writer with over 1,000 works to his credit, little of it has been recorded. Thus this excellent rendition by the Stuyvesant String Quartet of his *Quartet No. 6 in E*, the second in the Brazilian idiom, is a welcome addition to the repertory of recorded music.

It may sound a bit strange to the conservative listener, with its abundance of high harmonics, its contrasting moods and its strange rhythms, but no matter what one may think of it, he cannot say that it is dull. There seems to be something new every minute—perhaps too many new ideas make it hard to follow. There is probably an over-all scheme but it is not easily discernible. Those interested in modern music, especially those who have a flair for Stravinsky, will doubtless find this work quite exciting. It has been nicely recorded and the record surfaces are reasonably smooth.

OPERA



Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Bruna Rasa (soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Gino Bechi (baritone), Marucci (soprano), Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-soprano) with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala conducted by Pietro Mascagni. 11-12" La Voce del Padrone (Italian HMV) discs in album. (Automatic Sequence). \$28.88.

From Italy comes a complete and brand-new *Cavalleria Rusticana*, whose fiery music carries with it, in this case, the aura of an historic occasion. History is here supplied by the veteran composer, Pietro Mascagni, himself, for at the age of 77 he is present during this fine recording to conduct his own opera.

On the first record side, Mascagni makes a brief

but vigorous speech to the public in general, declaring that his *Cavalleria* is now 50 years old. With the knowledge that the *premiere* of the opera occurred at the Costanzi Theater in Rome on May 17, 1890, it is not hard to calculate that this recording was accomplished in 1940.

Mascagni conducts his opera with meticulous care. The *tempi* are often slower than one has become accustomed to of late, but repeated playings of the album with the score in hand will convince you finally of the logic and beauty of the composer's conception. His opera is performed just as he has written it.

The recording was made in Milan, presumably at La Scala, for the chorus and orchestra of that distinguished house were employed. *La Voce del Padrone* (His Master's Voice) gave Mascagni a free hand in the casting. Beniamino Gigli and Gino Bechi, reputedly Italy's greatest tenor and baritone, are present as Turridu and Alfio, while Lia Bruna Rasa, endorsed by Mascagni himself as the finest Santuzza of the last two decades and therefore his favorite interpreter of the role, sings the heroine's music with an authority that is unassailable.

Mme. Rasa's voice is perhaps not quite all that it was, when she made records for Columbia some 20 years ago. The highest notes are sometimes pushed and unsteady, but there is no gainsaying the many lovely and compelling moments of her singing. The soprano carries the chest quality pretty high up into the middle register, but in such a role as Santuzza, this device gives the authentic color to the music and the requisite "peasant" feeling. Mme. Rasa's *Voi lo sapete o Mamma* is superbly realized and her scorn of Lola and desperation with Turridu come across in no uncertain terms. She has been in all probability more associated with this role than any soprano since its original interpreter, the fabulous Gemma Bellincioni.

Undoubtedly the most consistently good singing of the set is supplied by the 50-year-old Beniamino Gigli, whose bell-like brilliance of voice belies his years. Mr. Gigli's *Siciliana* is a thing of beauty, though one would have preferred him to end this lovely passage softly, as it is in truth marked *perendosi* (losing itself). The famous tenor's final scene will probably set a standard for others to follow, while his *Brindisi* and its concluding high B fairly sparkle.

Gino Bechi's dark, virile voice (so reminiscent of Titta Ruffo's) is ideally suited to the imprecations of the wronged husband. Not since the days when Amato used to sing Alfio at the Metropolitan has a voice of such important calibre been heard in this music.

Signore Simionato and Marcucci have better voices than one generally associates with Mamma Lucia and Lola, but we suspect that Mascagni was given complete freedom in these matters. The La Scala chorus, orchestra and organ all come over with vivid yet

mellow effect.

Recording is on the booming side, the lowest bass notes of the orchestra often being disturbingly emphasized. If you can turn down your bass controls, you are urged to do so. Otherwise the reproduction is an imposing job.

And so Mascagni's red-blooded little opera will go down to posterity not only as he wrote it, but also as he conceived its interpretation.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel (complete opera). (Sung in English). Risè Stevens (mezzo-soprano), Nadine Conner (soprano), Thelma Votipka (soprano), John Brownlee (baritone), Claramae Turner (contralto), Lillian Raymondi (soprano), with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Max Rudolf. 12-12" discs in albums with libretto. Columbia Set MOP-26. \$17.70.

Columbia's opera plans, so elaborately and dramatically publicized last February, have at last materialized this month with the release of two handsome volumes containing a complete performance of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, sung in English. The recording took place this past June 5th and 6th in the Metropolitan Opera House. Cast, chorus, orchestra and conductor belong to the Metropolitan Opera Association. Thus the joint auspices of Columbia and the Metropolitan offer their first product.

It is a pleasure to report that the set is in every way a delight. Recording marks a new step forward, for the performance is unusually realistic; nothing is lost in the transference of actual sound to wax. The orchestra under Max Rudolf sounds lovely in the various instrumental passages. Never before have the woodwinds emerged so pure and alive.

One is apt to forget, between hearings, how rich and orchestrally important Humperdinck's beautiful music really is. His was indeed a masterly job, even when one has admitted the debt to *Siegfried* and to the *Meistersinger*. The little opera is a delightful blend of lilting folk-tunes and dramatic utterances, set in a musical tapestry of contrapuntal impressiveness.

Constance Bache's translation, which was used at the Metropolitan's revival last year, comes across with astounding clarity. The cast is the same as was employed by the company on that occasion.

Both Nadine Conner and Risè Stevens seem singularly right for the children who stray in the depths of the forest and stumble on the gingerbread house. This is particularly true of Miss Conner, whose high, fresh soprano sounds quite entrancing. The one in judicious bit of casting seems to be that of Thelma Votipka as the Witch. It is not that Miss Votipka does not give an able performance, but simply that this role calls for a voice of a far darker and heavier

type. Remember, that Louise Homer was the Metropolitan's first Witch! Miss Votipka's light voice is often hard to distinguish from Miss Conner's. A mezzo, or at least a dramatic soprano, would have offered the desired contrast.

John Brownlee is admirable as the Father, while Claramae Turner sings the Mother's by no means easy music with excellent vocal quality.

Miss Votipka sounds more in her element as the Sandman, and Lillian Raymond sings the beautiful measures of the Dew Fairy with clear, sparkling tones.

All in all, this is an auspicious start for this much-heralded series of complete operas under the distinguished auspices of Columbia and the Metropolitan Opera Association. May their next offering soon follow!

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: Turandot (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gina Cigna, Francesco Merli, Magda Olivero, Luciano Neroni, Armando Giannotti, Giuseppe Bravura, with E.I.A.R. Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Franco Ghione. 16-12" discs in albums. Parlophone Sets AP-26 and AP-27. \$35.70.

Bellini: Norma (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gina Cigna, Ebe Stignani, Giovanni Breviario, Tancredi Pasero, Adriana Perris, Emilio Rienzi, with E.I.A.R. Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui. 18-12" discs in albums. Parlophone Sets AP-20 and AP-21. \$39.90.

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Giuseppe Manacchini, Lina Pagliughi, Giovanni Malipiero, Muzio Giovagnoli, Luciano Neroni, Maria Vinciguerra, Armando Giannotti, with E.I.A.R. Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 13-12" discs in album. Parlophone Set AP-31. \$28.35.

Turandot, *Norma* and *Lucia* (unless a Lily Pons is handy) are not operas that one is likely to hear any day of the week, and therefore the availability of these complete sets once more on imported Parlophone, makes performances of these rarely given works a possibility whenever desired within the comfort of your own home.

The recordings are what is generally labeled as "modern". *Lucia* is notable for crystal-clear reproduction as well as for the limpid, utterly melting singing of Lina Pagliughi, undoubtedly the greatest coloratura soprano in the world today.

Norma, a score that was so dear to the heart of Wagner, emerges quite magnificently with its thrilling account of the title-role by Gina Cigna, who sang it at the Metropolitan in 1937. The recording was made during the summer of that same year in Turin. Not far behind are the Adalgisa and Oroveso of Ebe Stignani and Tancredi Pasero.

Turandot, Puccini's most sophisticated score, in

which his genius flamed at its technical peak, will make you revel in its sonorous choruses and exotic orchestration. Mme. Cigna dispenses the heroine's high C's with thrilling vibrancy and Francesco Merli is admirable in the lyric measures of the Calaf. Reproduction is realistically splendid. D.

Donizetti: La Favorita—A tanto amor (Act III). One side, and **Flotow: Martha**—Il mio Lionello (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Mattia Battistini (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1010). \$2.63.

Meyerbeer: Les Huguenots—Nobil Signors, Saluta! (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Louise Homer (contralto) with piano. One side, and **Schubert: Die Allmacht**. (Sung in German). Louise Homer (contralto) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1011). \$2.63.

Donizetti: Lucrezia Borgia—Brindisi (Act III). (Sung in German). One side, and **Arditi: Leggiere invisibile**—Bolero. (Sung in Italian). Ernestine Schumann-Heink (contralto) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1012). \$2.63.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly—Un bel di vedremo (Act II). One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Suicidio! (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Emmy Destinn (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1014). \$2.63.

Gounod: Romeo et Juliette—Ah! lève-toi soleil! (Act II). One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—The Flower Song (Act II). (Sung in French). Charles Dalmores (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1013). \$2.63.

The third issue of the Heritage Series again clearly and forcibly demonstrates how great artists sang and comported themselves forty odd years ago. This is an unusually interesting and representative selection.

To begin with we have two arias sung by the legendary Mattia Battistini (1857-1928). This great baritone never sang in America, but his fame in Russia, Spain and Germany, as well as in his native Italy, where he was variously referred to as *La Gloria d'Italia* and *Il Re del Bel Canto*, is now a matter of history. Signor Battistini sings *A tanto amor* from *La Favorita* and *Il mio Lionel* from *Marta*, an aria generally omitted in performances of Flotow's opera. It is easy to visualize this *grand seigneur* of the stage with his vibrant yet instrumental style and his fabulous ease in the upper register. Battistini was a past master in making his effects and getting his audience.

Ernestine Schumann-Heink (1861-1936) is often spoken of as the "Last of the Titans." She was a direct vocal descendant of Viardot and Brandt. Here we have two florid arias that serve well to display the lady's *bravura* style, her wonderful trills, and the lightness of tone when she so desires. Students of

singing will note how her tone rides free and supple on top of the breath-stream (also a feature of Battistini's singing). The *Bolero* of Arditì is a period-piece, while the *Lucrezia Borgia* battle-horse is one of the extraordinary vocal exhibitions on records.

Louise Homer (1871-1947) died this year and was properly referred to as America's greatest contralto. Her singing of Schubert's *Die Allmacht* displays this mistress of the grand manner in all her tonal amplitude and breadth of utterance. The selection from *Les Huguenots* shows that singers with large, dark voices were also required to possess vocal agility and technique. Both Homer and Schumann-Heink lived in an era when a firm, solid voicing of *Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix* was not considered enough for a contralto's success.

Emmy Destinn (1878-1930) was the possessor of an individual quality of voice that resembled no other. Hers was a great dramatic art. Mme. Destinn created *Madama Butterfly* for Covent Garden, London in 1905, sharing honors with Caruso and Scotti. Her *Un bel di*, recorded in 1908, prior to her American career, has a headlong thrust and inevitability, while her *Suicidio!* from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* is easily the most compelling account of this terrible song to be found in the range of recorded vocal art.

Charles Dalmores (1871-1939) is one of the most interesting and communicative of French tenors. His was an heroic voice, which nevertheless coupled clarion upper tones with nuanced diction and unusual refinement. Dalmores could create a mood as one can readily grasp while listening to his *Air de la Fleur* from *Carmen*. His aria from *Romeo* is also one of the most satisfactory to be placed on wax. Admitting some vocal dryness in the middle register of Dalmores' voice, one has equally to concede that he was an artist.

As is apt to be with records of this period (1906 to 1914), there is a clarity and truthfulness in the reproduction of the voice which much vaunted electrical recording cannot always duplicate. This is especially so with the smooth red Vinylite surfaces. An absence of annoying clicks, that plagued some of the earlier releases of this series, is to be noted with gratitude.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Bohème—Mi chiamano Mimì (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: La Bohème**—Addio di Mimì (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-11-9694). \$1.05.

We suppose that every recording artist who has ever sung the role of Mimì is entitled to make a record of these two principal arias—at least most of them have. We suppose that it is all right but it does sort of expand the catalogs considerably without adding any new items.

Miss Kirsten sings these arias acceptably, but her

voice sounds a bit shrill, especially in the *Mi chiamano Mimì* side. This may be because of faulty recording. Judging from the sample at hand we couldn't recommend this record very highly.

Giordano: Andrea Chénier (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gigli, Caniglia, Bechi, Simionato, Palombini, Huder, Tajo, Taddei, Paci, Zagonara, Conti, with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala conducted by Oliviero de Fabritiis. 13-12" La Voce del Padrone (Italian HMV) discs in album. (Automatic Sequence). \$34.13.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gigli, Bechi, Caniglia, Barbieri, Ribetti, Niccolini, Pasero, Novelli, Giusti, with Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera conducted by Tullio Serafin. 17-12" (33 sides) La Voce del Padrone (Italian HMV) discs in albums. (Automatic Sequence). \$43.32.

NOTE: These important sets of records just arrived from Italy. Detailed reviews of them by Max de Schauensee will appear in our November issue.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut—No! pazzo son! guardate (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: Il Trovatore**—Di quella pira (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA 5398). \$1.95.

Verdi: La Forza Del Destino—La vita e l'inferno (recit.) and O tu che in seno agli angeli (air) (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with La Scala Orchestra conducted by Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA 5410). \$1.95.

Bizet: Carmen—Ah! Mi parla di lei (Duet Act I). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) and Rina Lorenzelli Gigli (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA 5416). \$1.95.

In the first shipment of records to reach the studio from Italy since before the war were these three discs featuring the premier Italian tenor, Beniamino Gigli. Mr. Gigli, who will be remembered by all but the youngest of opera enthusiasts for his many triumphs with the Metropolitan, still is in excellent voice, and except for an occasional shortness of breath, gives just about as thrilling examples of operatic singing in the Italian manner as he did before he left America for his native land.

Most of the selections on these records are dramatic arias—just the sort of ones that bring Italian audiences to their feet with wild applause and shouts of "Bravo! Bravo!" These discs were made in Italy for the home market and the soloist is given great prominence—the orchestra is always very much in the background and is never allowed to come close to overshadowing the singer. If you like operatic arias sung just as they are in Milan, any and all of

these discs will suit you to a tee. They have been satisfactorily recorded and the surfaces are very smooth.

Flotow: Martha—M'appari tutt' amor (Act III). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—The Flower Song (Act II). (Sung in French). James Melton (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-10" disc (V-10-1329). 79¢.

James Melton tosses off these popular arias with seeming ease. His vast host of admirers will likely find them delightful. He is in fine voice and he is well supported by a splendid orchestra. Reproduction—excellent.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro—Dove sono (Aria, Act III). One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Sull' aria! Che soave zefiretto (Act III Duet). (Sung in German). Margaret Teschemacher (soprano) and Irma Beilke (contralto) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4690). \$2.63.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro—Non più andrai (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Hai già vinto (recit.) and Vedrò, mentr'io (aria) (Act III). (Sung in German). Gerhard Hüsch (baritone) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hanns Udo Müller. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4681). \$2.63.

Many record collectors consider these the finest examples of Mozart operatic recordings available. They were released abroad shortly before the war and have been unavailable in this country for a long time until a few copies arrived in a recent shipment. There is no question of the high artistry of Miss Teschemacher and Mr. Hüsch and their fine voices show off to excellent advantage on this pair of discs. Lovers of Mozart operatic recordings will not be able to resist adding these records to their collections.

VOCAL



Rubinstein: "Persian Love Song" (Gold rolls here below me, Op. 34, No. 9). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. One side, and **Massenet: Elégie** (Song of Mourning). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with piano accompaniment by Ivor Newton and violoncello obbligato by Cedric Sharpe. (Both sung in Russian). 1-12" disc (V-DB-1525). \$2.63.

The strange but enveloping genius of the late Feodor Chaliapin is with us again in a double-faced, imported HMV record. Chaliapin was vocally a law unto himself. Vocal teachers would have shrunk in horror from some of the unorthodox uses of a rugged and magnificent voice, but somehow, whether

we like it or not, we find ourselves forgiving genius much. Furthermore, this great basso was a lyric actor who knew no equal during the period that his Boris and Mefistofele were electrifying audiences everywhere.

Here we have a strangely exotic song by Anton Rubinstein, labeled *Persian Love Song*, but whose correct title is *Gold rolls here below Me*, from a set of *Persian Songs*, Opus 34. This haunting, quite unforgettable melody permits Chaliapin to demonstrate all his soft tones ranging from genuine head-tone to *falseto*. The final cadence is a remarkable exhibition of the singer's control of a high and much sustained *falseto*. Curious indeed is the basso's unorthodox singing of the *gruppettos*. But Chaliapin was Chaliapin!

On the reverse side is Massenet's *Elegie*, sung in Russian. The singer creates a definite atmosphere and he is to be thanked for singing the final tone as it is marked—softly. Otherwise, Chaliapin does pretty much as he pleases in distorting the rhythm and making his own effects. Georges Thill's lovely record of this well-worn number is still by all odds our favorite.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

A Patrice Munsel Program. Patrice Munsel (soprano) with Al Goodman and his orchestra and the Guild Choristers. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1130. \$4.20.

Patrice Munsel, the young lady from Spokane, who in 1943 at the age of eighteen made her debut with the Metropolitan and since that time has risen in popularity on the operatic stage, the concert platform, and over the air, has selected a number of selections that have particularly appealed to her radio audiences for this really attractive little album. RCA Victor supplied Miss Munsel with support similar to that which she usually has in the broadcasting studio—an adequate orchestra and a well-trained chorus of fine voices. One might say quite accurately that the present album contains a number of snapshots from Miss Munsel's most successful broadcasts.

The selections chosen for this album are: *Granada; Dark Eyes; Il Bacio; Estrellita; Andalusia; Solvejg's Song; El Relicario* and *Cielito Lindo*.

Bishop: Home, Sweet Home. One side, and **The Last Rose of Summer.** Dorothy Maynor (soprano) with piano accompaniment by George Schick. 1-10" disc (V-10-1340). 79¢.

We were very much disappointed in Miss Maynor's renditions of these beloved ballads. She does not give them the lilt that is required to make them reach the hearts of her listeners. One might think that Miss Maynor was singing in a language with which she was not familiar. Her performances give the impression that she is carefully studying each song as she goes along line by line—there is no abandon.

Voglio Vivere Così. One side, and **Tu non mi Lascera.** (Sung in Italian). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Cesare Galino. 1-10" disc (CE-AT 0115). \$2.50.

Malinconia d'Amore. One side, and **Ho messo il cuore nei Pasticci.** (Sung in Italian). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Tito Petralia. 1-10" disc (CE-AT 0125). \$2.50.

Tagliavini fans will doubtless be delighted to know that these two discs, containing selections from Italian films in which he is featured, have recently arrived from Italy. The first disc listed above (CE-AT 0115) is from *Voglio vivere così* and the second (CE-AT 0125) is from *La Donna è mobile*.

If you would like to hear Tagliavini sing songs that are presently popular with Italian movie audiences, here they are. The reproduction is very good and the record surfaces smooth.

The Whiffenpoof Song. One side, and **The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.** Charles Kullman (tenor) with male chorus and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Julius Burger. 1-10" disc (C-4500M). \$1.

At last we have a worthy interpretation of the famous Yale ballad *The Whiffenpoof Song*. Charles Kullman is great in this number and he is ably supported by an adequate male chorus. We understand that Mr. Kullman, who once attended Yale University, was recently given an honorary membership in the Whiffenpoof Society, an undergraduate organization. That was a fitting tribute for his fine rendition of its official song. The ever-popular *The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi* is nicely presented by Mr. Kullman and the chorus on the reverse side of this disc.

Donaudy: O Del Mio Amato Ben. One side, and **Martini: Plaisir d'Amour.** Tito Schipa (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-DB-2131). \$2.63.

This superb disc containing two of the finest examples of the singing of Tito Schipa has been in the HMV catalog for a number of years. Before the war, numerous copies were imported and were quickly sold to admirers of this great artist. A recent shipment from England contained a few copies. Those who are interested should contact a dealer who specializes in imported records.

Bixio: Mamma. One side, and **Bixio: Se vuoi goderti la vita.** (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-10" disc (V-10-1339). 79¢.

These two selections are from the Italian film "Madre" in which Mr. Gigli is featured. They are average Italian popular songs with pleasing melodies. We are happy to say that Mr. Gigli forgets for the

moment that he is a great operatic singer and renders them in an appropriate and appealing *bel canto* style. The reproduction is fine.

Schubert: Der Tod und das Mädchen, Op. 7, No. 3. One side, and **Schubert: Wohin?** (Die Schöne Müllerin, Op. 25, No. 2). (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniment by Franz Rupp. 1-10" disc (V-10-1327). 79¢.

Marian Anderson is right at home with these beautiful Schubert songs and gives performances that will doubtless receive the highest praise from even the most discerning students of lieder. Franz Rupp supplies impeccable accompaniments.

CHORAL



Bach: Mass in B minor. (Sung in Latin). Anne McKnight and June Gardner (sopranos), Lydia Summers (contralto), Lucius Metz (tenor), Paul Matthen (bass), and the RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 17-12" discs in albums. RCA Victor Set DMC-118 (DMC-1145 and DM-1146). \$19.95.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it by Max de Schauensee will appear in our November issue.

Angels from the realms of glory ("Lewes"). Come, thou long-expected Jesus ("Cross of Jesus"). O come, all ye faithful ("Adeste Fideles"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 191). \$2.10.

Brightest and best ("Bede"). Father most high ("Ades Pater supreme"). Jesus, meek and lowly ("Ave radix"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 192). \$2.10.

Sing, my tongue (French Carol). The royal banners forward go ("Vexilla Regis prodeunt"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 193). \$2.10.

These three discs are included in the group of records known as The Royal School of Church Music Records which we mentioned editorially a month or so ago. We feel that they are of sufficient general interest to be listed in the body of our bulletin. Most anyone, who enjoys hymns beautifully sung by an excellent choir consisting of men and boys, will certainly find these discs very much to his liking. The

catalogs contain very few recordings of this character and certainly none that are superior to these. They are, of course, in the tradition of the English Church, and were recorded in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, London. The recording has been faithfully accomplished—even the atmosphere of the famous church in which they were recorded seems to be present.

Pange lingua (Gregorian melody 3d mode). One side, and **Tantum ergo** (Gregorian melody 3d mode) and **O Salutaris Hostia** (Gregorian melody 8th mode). Choristers of the Basilica di S. Vittore, Milan, with organ accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-HN 1592). \$1.42.

Tantum ergo (Ambrosian melody) and **O Salutaris Hostia** (Ambrosian melody). One side, and **O Sacro Convivium** (Ambrosian melody) and **Dio sia benedetto** (traditional). Choristers of the Basilica di S. Vittore, Milan, with organ accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-HN 1593). \$1.42.

O via, vita, veritas (trad.) and **O quam amabilis** (trad.). One side, and **Adoro te devote** (Gregorian). Choristers of the Basilica di S. Vittore, Milan, with organ accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-HN 1606). \$1.42.

In a recent shipment from Italy were these three discs containing fine examples of the superb singing of a selected group from the choir of the Basilica of St. Vittore in Milan. Those persons who are interested in religious music of this character will doubtless find these records well worth adding to their libraries. Reproduction—excellent.

PIANO



Horowitz: Mendelssohn's Wedding March and Variations after Liszt. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9693). \$1.05.

Last July this disc was included in album (V-M-1121) containing some lovely Mendelssohn selections very nicely played by Mr. Horowitz. In reviewing this album entitled "Piano Music of Mendelssohn," we said:

"The startling item in this collection is Horowitz's *Mendelssohn's Wedding March and Variations after Liszt*. To us the title seems a gross understatement. This piece is certainly not *after* Liszt, it is out and beyond Liszt. It is the sort of selection that a performer might put on his program to wake up the person who came to the concert because someone gave him a ticket. The familiar Wedding March tune would attract him and the chime and music box effects would probably tickle his risibilities. It certainly does not belong in the same album with the other pieces."

You can, therefore, imagine our surprise when

this disc, issued as a single because of the great public demand for it, arrived at the studio. It would seem that we just made a bad guess and Mr. Horowitz's opus has come back to haunt us and remind us that we do not always judge the public taste accurately.

Selections from the Music of Schumann—Brahms—Liszt. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1149. \$4.20.

This album was designed primarily to attract those who will see and enjoy the new film "Song of Love," which is based on the life of Robert Schumann, but, secondarily, it may find a much larger audience among the vast number of music lovers who will welcome an opportunity to secure a collection of familiar pieces beautifully played by the great artist, Artur Rubinstein. Here is much lovely piano music all in one package. All of the pieces were played by Mr. Rubinstein for the sound track of the film mentioned above.

The Schumann selections in this group are: *Arabesque, Op. 18*; *Traumerei, Op. 15, No. 7*; *Widmung, Op. 25, No. 1*; and also the Liszt arrangement of the last named. The Brahms pieces are: *Wiegenlied, Op. 49, No. 4*; *Rhapsody in G minor, Op. 79, No. 2*; and *Hungarian Dance No. 4 in F minor*.

The piano reproduction has been very nicely accomplished.

Beethoven—arr. Liszt: Adelaide, Op. 108. Egon Petri (piano). 1-12" disc (C72163D). \$1.25.

We can't enthuse over Liszt's transcription for piano of the lovely Beethoven song *Adelaide*. It is a long piece, taking nearly eight minutes to play, and it becomes pretty monotonous to us long before it is finished. Another pianist might make it a bit more interesting but we rather doubt it. We have no way of knowing this, as we cannot remember ever having heard it before.

We are sorry that Egon Petri, who has made some fine recordings, wasted his time on this one. We especially regret it because we understand that Mr. Petri has definitely retired from the concert stage and will devote himself to teaching. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that he will not make any more recordings, but it might very well be that he will not, in which case record collectors will lose the services of a very capable artist.

Brazilian Piano Music. Villa-Lobos: Brazilian Folk Songs (two sides). Pinto: *Memories of Childhood* (two sides). Villa-Lobos: *The Three Marias* and *Guarnieri: Toccata*. Guiomar Novaes (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-692. \$3.75.

The brilliant pianist, Guiomar Novaes, turns her attention to some lovely little melodies composed by her compatriots, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Octavio Pinto

and Camargo Guarnieri, and presents a charming little album that will be a delight to those who find light music in the Latin American vein attractive. All of it is music that was written to be enjoyed and Miss Novaes plays it in that spirit on these discs. The reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Brahms: Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24. Solomon (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7563 to V-C-7565). (Also available in manual sequence, V-C-3301 to V-C-3303). \$5.99.

At long last some of the fine recordings that the English were able to produce during the war are arriving in this country. We have been looking forward to hearing this Solomon version of Brahms' *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel* ever since we read the glowing reviews it received when it was released in England nearly five years ago. It is certainly an outstanding recording and one that lovers of piano music will certainly welcome. Solomon gives a performance of this difficult selection that calls for the highest praise. There may be those who will prefer the earlier domestic recording by Egon Petri but we rather think that they will be very much in the minority.

HARPSICHORD



Rameau and Couperin Harpsichord Selections. Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). Rameau: *Gavotte and Variations in A minor*. Rameau: *La Poule*. Couperin: *Les Fastes de la grande et ancienne Ménestrandise*. Couperin: *Le Tic-Toc Choc*. 3-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 84. \$4.05.

We listen to phonograph records during a good part of each day and much that we hear does not create much of a stir within us, but not so this album of 18th century French music played on the harpsichord by the brilliant artist, Sylvia Marlowe. After listening to these discs, we felt that we wanted to stand up and cheer. Miss Marlowe is a consummate artist, and her choice of selections for this album is perfect, for we have a delightful concert of harpsichord music to enjoy whenever we feel so inclined. We rather guess that that will be quite often now that we have this album in our library.

We are glad to report that Musicraft has done an excellent job of recording Miss Marlowe's superb performances.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Dmitri Shostakovich: The Man and His Work. By Ivan Martynov. Translated from the Russian by T. Guralsky. 197 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$2.75.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—East, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, HW—Hargall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofonken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

- - - -

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 9

NOVEMBER 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+ 214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Columbia Book of Musical Masterworks. Edited by Goddard Lieberson. Introduction by Edward Wallerstein. xiii+ 546 pp. Allen, Towne & Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

The three books listed above are all designed to help those who are seriously building record libraries. Any or all of them will be of especial value to those music lovers who live at great distances from large cities where dealers with adequate stocks of records are not available. Such collectors must depend largely on the printed word and these three volumes contain a wealth of information which should prove to be of real value. It is probably just a coincidence but the three men who are responsible for these books are all connected in some way with Columbia Records, Inc. John Ball, who is music editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, writes program notes for Columbia album sets. Paul Affelder is director of Columbia's Children's Record and Music Appreciation Departments. Goddard Lieberson is vice-president and director of the Masterworks Division of Columbia Records, Inc.

Both Mr. Ball and Mr. Affelder list other than Columbia records, mostly Victor, in their books, but Mr. Lieberson, whose volume is based largely on the notes that have accompanied the various Columbia Masterworks albums that have been released, mentions only Columbia recordings. The editor in his preface suggests that his book be used for in-

formation regarding the music contained in Columbia album sets. He points out that it is much more convenient to hold than the large record album with its notes on the inside cover. He also mentions that Columbia stopped issuing separate booklets containing the notes because these were often lost or were inadvertently filed in the wrong album. We have noticed that recently Columbia has omitted both the booklet, and notes on the inside cover, from its albums containing works that are covered in Mr. Lieberson's book. This may not be significant, we hope it is not, for we do hope that Columbia will supply notes in some form with each album. Generally they have been prepared by able writers and are of value to the large majority of record collectors.

The Columbia Book of Musical Masterworks is arranged alphabetically by composers, with a short but interesting biographical sketch of each, followed by an adequate consideration of the works that have been recorded by Columbia. It is indexed so that anyone may find the composition he is interested in with dispatch.

Records for Pleasure contains a lot of general information that should be of value to the record collector. For example there is a chapter containing numerous hints that might guide a person purchasing records, and thus save him, not only money, but the annoyance of having to return ones that proved defective in manufacture. There are also chapters dealing with the care of records, on how to select a phonograph, describing the recording and manufacture of records, and other matters of interest to the phonophile. The final section of Mr. Ball's book is devoted to the consideration of "Two Hundred Selected Re-

cordings" and "Recordings of Special Interest." A comprehensive index makes this volume of value for reference.

How to Build a Record Library is designed particularly for those persons who feel that they would like to know and appreciate fine music, but just don't know how to go about it. Mr. Affelder assumes that everyone can enjoy and appreciate Strauss' *Blue Danube Waltz*, and with that as a starting point, he suggests and describes other such melodious selections of a gradually more profound nature. By the most easy steps he leads the reader from melody alone, to rhythm and melody, and then to the larger forms of the symphony, the concerto, etc. By this easy process, the music lover, if he has within him the spark of real musical appreciation, will soon find himself in the realm of Beethoven's *Ninth*, the last quartets of that composer, the lieder of Schubert and Brahms, and the works of the best of our modern composers—compositions which at the outset would have been practically unintelligible to him. At the close of his book, Mr. Affelder suggests basic libraries that may be purchased for from \$50 to \$300, and adds short chapters on "Care of Records" and "How Records Are Made." An index of the compositions referred to in the text, arranged by composers, completes this very interesting and worth while book.

* * *

Columbia is the first of the major companies to issue a 1948 record catalog, in fact, at the moment it is the only general catalog available—Victor's and Decca's have been out-of-print for many months. Columbia has changed its format somewhat in its new catalog. The artist's section at the end has been inserted in the body of the titular section in strict alphabetical order and short biographical sketches of the more important popular artists, with a list of their recordings, has been added. The new catalog is alphabetical from start to finish. It contains 508 pages. The price is 25c. In ordering a copy from your dealer by mail, you should add 10c for postage, as the dealer handles this item without profit.

* * *

Nearly all manufacturers of records have

definitely discontinued making album sets in manual sequence. However, Victor has just announced a new policy. Victor will supply its sets in both automatic and manual sequences, but will charge a premium of \$1 for all manual albums, regardless of the number of discs. In other words, an automatic set that lists without tax for \$6 will list at \$7 in manual sequence. Victor states that the reason for this is that there is so little call for manual sets that it is unprofitable to make them up in that arrangement at the standard list prices prevailing at the present time.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 130 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

ORCHESTRA



Shostakovich: Symphony No. 7, Op. 60 ("Leningrad"). Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 8-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 83. \$10.50.

If Columbia or Victor had issued a recording of the *Leningrad Symphony* in the autumn or winter of 1942, after nation-wide publicity had been attached to the work by the squabbles of Toscanini, Stokowski, and Koussevitzky as to who should conduct the premiere performance, the sales of this work might have been very large indeed. But now, five years after the excitement of its premiere, the demand for a recording of this turgid creation is at a low ebb. It has been rarely played during the past two or three years; although performances of several other Shostakovich symphonies are frequent, and certainly desirable.

The *Leningrad Symphony* is admittedly a program composition, and, as is the case with many program works of a historical nature, dated to the point of being more uninteresting the older it gets. We would not care to argue about Shostakovich's sincerity in creating this enormous thing; for listening to it with a knowledge of the program and a recollection of the dark days which accompanied its creation, we admit it has powerful moments. It is conceived on a gigantic scale. Some of the thematic material is downright good; the skilled craftsmanship of Shostakovich is often apparent.

Taking the work as a whole, in the year 1947, and as the majority who might purchase a recording of it will hear it, we cannot feel moved to urge it on our readers. Those who want it, for reasons of their own, may safely purchase this recording, reasonably sure that no other version is apt to appear. The present set is in extremely competent hands, for Steinberg is a highly respectable conductor. The Buffalo Philharmonic does nobly with the score and in many spots sounds like a first rank orchestra, although some of the difficult high brass parts do not have a big league finish. The reproduction is good but not outstanding; surfaces on our set were good. So for those who know they want it, here is a commendable recording; but for the others—*caveat emptor*. We salute Musicraft alike for their courage, contribution, and the quality of their accomplishment. S.

Beethoven: "Battle" Symphony (Wellington's Victory at Vittoria), Op. 91. Five sides, and **Beethoven: King Stephen Overture**, Op. 117. Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 3-12" discs in album. Artist Set JS-14. \$7.35.

Research fails to find another domestic recording of Beethoven's "Battle" Symphony, that unusual work that the great composer originally wrote for Mälzel's Panharmonicon, a mechanical instrument that imitated a military band. This instrument was housed in a cabinet and the music was produced by the pins in a revolving cylinder operating the keys. Before this work was transferred to its cylinder, Mälzel persuaded Beethoven to orchestrate this selection for full orchestra, for a charity concert in Vienna for the benefit of disabled veterans of the battle of Hanau. The first performance was therefore given in Vienna on December 8, 1813, at a concert which also introduced a Beethoven work that was to live through the years, his *Seventh Symphony*.

In the "Battle" Symphony, we have the rare occurrence of Beethoven writing to order a work that was designed entirely to attract the public in general. It was conceived to celebrate Wellington's victory over Napoleon at Vittoria, which occurred on June 21, 1813. It is descriptive music introducing *Rule Britannia*, and the French patriotic selection *Malbrook*, which is better known to us as "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." It is said that, at its first performance, the musicians in the orchestra did not take it seriously and thought it quite a joke, but the public thought it was grand and it enjoyed considerable popularity on the Continent and in England for a number of years. Today it is forgotten and only students of Beethoven are likely to know of its existence.

Werner Janssen has given it a brilliant performance on these discs, and, if we will not attempt to take it too seriously, we may sit back and enjoy it as did the audiences of Beethoven's own time. In any case, it is an interesting item for a collection of

Beethoven recordings.

The odd side of this set contains the only domestic recording of another Beethoven selection of the same period. It is not of great consequence but it is an appropriate filler because no other recording of it is generally available.

The reproduction throughout this set is excellent and the discs have been pressed on a most quiet nonbreakable material. R.

Ravel: Valses Nobles et Sentimentales. Four sides, and **Ravel: Daphnis and Chloe, Suite No. 1**. Three sides, and **Debussy—orch. Ravel: Sarabande** (Pour le piano). San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1143. \$5.25.

We expected a lot from this set, and were delighted to find it exceeded our highest hopes. Monteux is without rival in this country when it comes to French music (as well as some other types of music too). His reading of the *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* has the perfect blend of cool brilliance and ironic warmth that this characteristic score of Ravel's contains. Certain passages anticipate similar music which Ravel wrote in *La Valse* nearly a decade later. Originally written as a chain of waltzes for piano, Ravel later orchestrated the *Valses* and supplied a ballet scenario. A few years later Pierre Monteux presented the first concert performance of the orchestrated *Valses*.

Another great conductor of French music today is Charles Münch, and it is he who recently appeared as conductor in the English Decca set of both *Daphnis and Chloe Suites* (EDA-29). The present Monteux set presents the First Suite complete; Münch's set omitted the second section, *Interlude*, which is a very effective night piece employing a wordless choir backstage. As both conductors direct this music with great style, feeling, and authority, the balance of favor must necessarily be with Monteux for presenting the complete suite.

For those who admire Ravel, this set will be the keystone of their collection. For those who don't know whether they like him or not, or who know him only through *Bolero* (nearly always misinterpreted), this set is representative of the best of Ravel, and is a marvelous starting point to make his acquaintance. The reproduction is excellent, and from every standpoint, this is Monteux's finest set to date. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-699. \$4.60.

At least nineteen recordings have been made of the great *Unfinished Symphony*, and it is not without good reason that this work has received so many waxings. In addition to being a perennial favorite

the world over, it is one of the greatest pieces of symphonic literature ever constructed. Of these nineteen or more recordings, many were made or issued in this country, and some have been outstanding readings. The one most favorably received by the critics as well as by many collectors is the Beecham one (Col. MM-330) and justifiably so for it is soundly presented from every standpoint. Many others have been admired from the old Stokowski-Philadelphia (Vic. M-16) to the recent Fistoulari-National Symphony (EDA-14). One set that appeared for a few years and found ardent favor with many was the Walter-Vienna Philharmonic version (Vic. G-9). The unique quality of the Vienna Orchestra usually brought anyone under its spell, and Walter's warm treatment of the *Unfinished* added to the attraction of this set.

Columbia has now brought this highly regarded Schubert interpreter together with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the results should please another multitude of prospective owners of an *Unfinished* set. Our opinion, after hearing this new set, was that Walter directed it with a little too much abandon, particularly the first movement. Several others who have heard it disagree and think it is the last word. We all agreed the Philadelphians play beautifully and are recorded equally well. S.

Borodin: Prince Igor—Polovtsian Dances. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gregor Fitelberg. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-34. \$5.25.

How good can these EDA sets get to be? This one seems to be the best yet. It has everything we always wish for in ideal reproduction: depth and brilliance, power and perspective, clarity and resonance, and above all, that indefinable something that makes us feel we are in a hall hearing the orchestra and not in our home hearing a phonograph. This set has everything, including our unbounded enthusiasm—it begs description.

For those who like their *Polovtsian Dances* fierce, wild, and savage, this set will serve to show how the music should really sound when given a fair chance. Fitelberg does not adopt as rapid tempi in certain sections as those who like to make this music noisy and hysterical, rather he sets a just tempo and clearly and forcefully projects the musical as well as the emotional aspects of the score. We never felt the music dragging, but we were often aware of its many beauties that pass unnoticed in other readings. After the third or fourth hearing we were convinced this is the finest reading we have ever heard of the *Polovtsian Dances*—and from a conductor we had known of, but whose work we had never before heard.

Those who own the Beecham choral version (Col. MX-54) have this work in a more acceptable form, and in a brilliant interpretation. For the many who wish a concert version by orchestra only, the present album is recommended unreservedly. This set was recorded at the Wembley Town Hall. S.

Dukas: The Sorcerer's Apprentice. Three sides, and **Debussy: The Blessed Damsel**—Prelude. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-16. \$5.25.

This three-sided *frr* recording of *L'Apprenti sorcier* is in many ways the most satisfactory one to date. It is not possible to play this score properly on two record sides, as Toscanini demonstrated a number of years ago with a performance entirely lacking in humor. Dukas has supplied numerous touches to this minor masterpiece that cannot be slighted or raced, otherwise it will lose "the intensity of its mettle, the impish vivacity of its accent, and the discreetly comic spirit of its rhythms." Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra (VM-717) realized the individualities of this score, but the effect was too supercharged for some. Mitropoulos and the Minneapolis (CMX-212) received a poor reproduction. The recent Ormandy recording is a dazzling virtuoso job on two sides; but like the older Toscanini one, it misses much of the inherent humor of the score by its rapid pacing. We feel the fine Spaniard Jorda has accomplished a very colorful reading; and for good measure, the fourth side contains the lovely *Blessed Damsel Prelude*, exquisitely played. S.

Ravel: Pavane for a Dead Princess. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-9729). \$1.05.

We are delighted to have a fine modern recording of this lovely Ravel selection. Yes! We know that Kostelanetz made an arrangement for his orchestra not too long ago but it is not to be considered with this excellent rendition by the Boston Symphony. It is just the sort of music that any music lover may enjoy. It has been beautifully played and splendidly recorded.

Morton Gould Showcase. Morton Gould and his orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-706. \$5.85.

If you find Morton Gould arrangements fascinating, as so many persons do, you'll go for this album in a big way. It contains some of his most popular and finest. If Mr. Gould were seeking a contract with a new broadcasting company, this album is just the sort of collection of his performances that he would likely send them as samples of his work.

Included in the album are the gypsy-like *Two Guitars*, and the stirring and characteristically American *Birth of the Blues*. Other styles and tastes are represented by Loeb's *Masquerade*, Simon's *The Peanut Vendor* (El Manisero), Cole Porter's *Begin the Beguine*, *Georgia On My Mind* by Carmichael, *Blues in the Night* by Arlen from the film of the same name, and Braham's *Limehouse Blues*.

The recording and record surfaces are highly satisfactory.

Puccini—arr. Godfrey: *La Bohème*—Selections. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Richard Tauber. 1-12" disc (C-72235D). \$1.25.

The noted tenor, Richard Tauber, tries his hand at leading an orchestra with satisfying if not brilliant results. If you would like an orchestral recording of selections from *La Bohème*, this disc isn't bad.

Bach—arr. Cailliet: *Toccatà and Fugue in D minor*. Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" (Artist AR-1001). \$2.10.

Ravel: Bolero. Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (Artist UA-1005). \$2.10.

There are plenty of recordings of these selections presently available but as Werner Janssen gives both of them most brilliant performances, and as the records are pressed on silent nonbreakable material, there is just a chance that some of our readers would like to know of their existence, thus their listing in this month's issue.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 7 in F, Op. 59, No. 1 ("Rasoumovsky No. 1"). Nine sides, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 17 in B flat, K. 458**—Minuet. The Paganini Quartet. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1151. \$6.30.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 8 in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Rasoumovsky No. 2"). The Paganini Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1152. \$5.25.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 9 in C, Op. 59, No. 3 ("Rasoumovsky No. 3"). Seven sides, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 21 in G, K. 575**—Menuetto. The Paganini Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1153. \$5.25.

In its announcement of its November releases, RCA Victor heads the list with these three albums by the Paganini Quartet; a new organization that was founded only a year ago, and whose series of concerts at the University of California met with enthusiastic praise from both the public and the critics. This quartet consists of Henri Temianka (first violin), Gustave Roessels (second violin), Robert Courte (viola), and Robert Maas (violoncello). All of them had known each other in Belgium before World War II, but it was not until they got together here in America that they played together as a quartet. Both Henri Temianka and Robert Maas will be remembered by collectors of imported records for their solo work in various European recordings. Mr. Maas will also be remembered as a member of the original Pro Arte Quartet. It is interesting to note that they took the name they did for their pres-

ent quartet because all of the instruments they use were once owned by the great violin virtuoso, Nicolo Paganini. Mr. Temianka plays the actual instrument that Paganini used on his famous European tours during the early 19th century.

It is intensely interesting to have all three of Beethoven's Rasoumovsky Quartets played by the same group of players and to have them all available at one time. These quartets are among the most popular of Beethoven's works in that form, and while quite difficult to perform, they are not so profound but that the average lover of chamber music can easily appreciate and enjoy them. The choice of them for the debut of this new quartet was, in our opinion, a very happy one.

The Paganini Quartet has made an excellent start and provided this group continues together, there is no reason that it should not develop into one of the leading chamber music organizations of our time. Perhaps someday it will approach the perfection of the Budapest Quartet—that superb ensemble that stands out so prominently in the realm of present-day chamber music.

Mozart: Quintet in D major, K. 593. Budapest String Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-708. \$4.60.

Some ten years ago this lovely work was recorded for Victor by the Pro Arte Quartet with Alfred Hobday (second viola). It was immediately recognized by lovers of chamber music as an item well worth consideration and it found its way into many record libraries. The present superb rendition by the Budapest players rather outshines the earlier version. We hope that the listing of this new release will call this work to the minds of all serious music lovers, for it will make a nice addition to any collection of records.

This quintet was written shortly before the composer's death, when it is reported that he was ill and sorely lacking in funds, but certainly no trace of his depressed condition is discernible in this altogether gracious music. The Budapest players are at their best in music of this character and turn out a performance that calls for the highest praise. If you think that chamber music is just a little beyond you, listen to this recording—it is very possible that you will find it most enjoyable—the lovely melodies will very likely come to you without any great effort on your part.

The reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Vivaldi: Concerto Grosso in D minor. Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. 1-12" disc in folder. Keynote K-2003. \$1.84.

Keynote has been very successful in bringing forth a version of this lovely work in the manner in which it was played during the life of the composer. A small

orchestra, in which there are players who are qualified to take the several solos, has been employed under the very able conductor, Alexander Schneider. All in all a particularly fine recording has been accomplished and one we do not hesitate to recommend to any music lover who enjoys the music of another age as it was conceived—one who does not have to have it arranged for an orchestra of a hundred pieces with mountains of sound and blare.

The reproduction rates with the best of modern recording, and the disc is made of a nonbreakable material with silent surfaces.

Bach: Concerto in D minor. Manuel Compinsky (violin) and Gordon Schoenberg (oboe) with the Pacific Symphonetta conducted by Willem van den Burg. 2-12" discs in album. Alco Set AC-202. \$3.78.

According to the notes that accompany this album, "many musicologists claim that Bach wrote it for violin, oboe and orchestra, as it is recorded here for the first time." Whether Bach did or did not write it for this combination is not too important, for the fine artists who have made the present recording have achieved some lovely music that is well worth the attention of all record collectors, especially those who are interested in the immortal Johann Sebastian.

Philadelphians will have a special interest in this recording because it has been directed by Willem van den Burg, who, for nine years was solo 'cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He left Philadelphia in 1935 to become solo 'cellist and associate conductor of the San Francisco Symphony. At present Mr. van den Burg is under contract to M-G-M in Hollywood, but continues his concert career as soloist and conductor.

OPERA



Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gigli, Bechi, Caniglia, Barbieri, Ribetti, Niccolini, Pasero, Novelli, Giusti, with Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera conducted by Tullio Serafin. 17-12" (33 sides) La Voce del Padrone (Italian HMV) discs in albums. (Automatic Sequence). \$43.32.

A new, imported, complete *Un Ballo in Maschera* is a notable addition to the growing list of recorded operas. Despite promises and the usual blaring ballyhoo from our domestic companies, with each passing month it becomes more obvious that we shall have to rely on European sources, on countries ravaged by war, for our complete recorded operas. To comment at length on this state of affairs might lead one from the paths of purely musical criticism.

The new *Ballo* is a valuable addition, for Verdi's fine old opera, so typical of his middle period, as well as being a treasure chest of lovely Verdian melodies, deserved the honor of perpetuation in its

entirety (only one or two short traditional cuts are made) on wax.

Tullio Serafin, remembered for his many distinguished performances at the Metropolitan, is the authoritative and dynamic conductor. With the orchestra of Rome's Royal Opera House at his disposal, his fervor is such that it tends sometimes to cover the singers.

The singers are important artists. Beniamino Gigli is the Riccardo. He gives an unusually lyric performance of a role that can stand more impassioned and dramatic treatment. The famous tenor with the loveliest voice since Caruso, is beginning to show his age in this set. He sings with great care, often sparingly. The old reckless abandon to the tumult of the moment, the ringing prolonged climaxes are no longer present. Mr. Gigli moves with obvious caution in the superb and very taxing love-duet of the second act. Nevertheless, he manages to arrive without mishap on the final high C with Mme. Caniglia, who overwhelms him throughout. The tenor's laughing phrases in the famous Quintet are overdone. One has only to listen to Caruso and Bonci's records of this passage to realize that Mr. Gigli's mirthless cackles are not altogether successful. Granting a loss of brilliance and sustaining power—the inevitable toll of time—Gigli is nevertheless Gigli, a tenor of whom we have always expected so much that he makes us super-critical. The tenor's singing is still smooth, cleanly phrased and many times of lovely quality.

Maria Caniglia, the opera's unfortunate heroine, Amelia, falls somewhat short of the great standard she set for herself in the *Forza del Destino* albums. Her singing here is notable for its dramatic impact and vitality. Her best moment is a superbly sung *Morro, ma prima in grazia*, in which she sustains her reputation as Italy's finest dramatic soprano of the day.

Gino Bechi, the Renato, gets off to a slow start. His opening aria, *Alla vita che t'arride*, finds him not at ease. During the first two acts his unsteady tones have trouble piercing maestro Serafin's highly-gearred orchestra. However, in the third act he comes into his own with a nobly sung *Eri tu?* At its best, it is a commanding voice.

There is a full-toned Ulrica in Fedora Barbieri, and the music of the joyous little page, Oscar, is fluently and brightly sung by Elda Ribetti. Tancredi Pasero and Ugo Novelli are properly ponderous as those wicked conspirators with the Rover Boys names—Sam and Tom.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Giordano: Andrea Chenier—Come un bel di di Maggio (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera**—Di' tu se fedele (Barcarola) (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-10" disc (V-10-1323). 79c.

Bjoerling has selected for this disc two arias that

are not quite as well known as most of the ones he has recorded before. Opera fans will find them interesting and they should make this fine tenor even more popular than he now is with record collectors.

Operatic Duets. Puccini: La Boheme—In un coupé (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—Solenne in quest' ora (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—Invano Alvaro; Una suora mi lasciasti (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Jan Peerce (tenor) and Leonard Warren (baritone), with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel and Erich Leinsdorf. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1156. \$3.15.

This album will be a test as to whether record collectors generally will accept these typically Italian operatic duets sung by two American singers. There is no question about the fine voices of Jan Peerce and Leonard Warren, but record collectors, unlike the majority of opera goers, have ringing in their ears the voices and interpretations of Caruso, Scotti, Battistini and others of that era, and immediately compare the present young men with these giants, and, of course, they fall short. We have noted for sometime that many of our fine young American singers are entirely satisfactory to the audiences in the opera houses but that their records fail to achieve impressive sales figures. This is really no one's fault—record collectors can immediately turn to their libraries and bring forth the voices of the greatest of operatic artists and the present singers do not satisfy them. If opera goers could by some feat of magic recall Caruso, Tamagno, Battistini *et al.*, we are rather sure that they would do so. This is a new quirk in the realm of music that has developed since the advent of recordings.

CHORAL



Bach: Mass in B minor. (Sung in Latin). Anne McKnight and June Gardner (sopranos), Lydia Summers (contralto), Lucius Metz (tenor), Paul Matthen (bass), and the RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 17-12" discs in albums. RCA Victor Set DMC-118 (DM-1145 and DM-1146). \$19.95.

There are two schools of thought as to how the major works of Johann Sebastian Bach—especially the colossal *Mass in B Minor* should be approached.

If we conceive of the *Mass* as the musical counterpart of a great gothic cathedral, its vast arches thrusting upward into incense-stained space, it would then seem that there is no treatment that is too expansive, no choir too large or too resonant to shout the glory and praise of Almighty God.

However, in the last few years, a group of musical purists has arisen and frequently stated their opinions

on this subject in no uncertain terms. These people maintain that at the time in which Bach lived, no such grandiose treatment was accorded his greater works such as is conceived to-day, and that a loss of clarity as well as the composer's original intent is the result of anything deviating from this original point of departure.

Robert Shaw, with his limited choral forces, his feeling for meticulously etched detail, his sense of transparency, elasticity and balance, seems to be the chosen apostle and instrument of this more conservative school of thought.

To this reviewer, it is a source of personal regret that the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Pa., under its dynamic and scholarly leader, Dr. Ifor Jones, was not selected by RCA Victor to record this uncut *Mass in B Minor*. The writer has heard some 15 performances of the *Mass* in Bethlehem, where this amazing group dedicates itself exclusively to the music of Bach and makes a yearly feature of this stupendous manifestation of genius. These are occasions well outside the realm of everyday experience. Their tonal amplitude, their enthusiasm, as well as the self-dedicated quality of each individual chorister, make them events that completely justify people journeying to Bethlehem from all parts of the United States.

Robert Shaw's approach to the *B Minor Mass* is a far less imposing or vital one than Dr. Jones's. However, if we accept this difference of approach, we then can feel nothing but praise for Mr. Shaw, after listening to these beautifully made records.

Undoubtedly one misses the sudden impact of massed voices in the opening *Kyrie*, a moment, that never fails to take one's breath away at Bethlehem. One may also regret that Mr. Shaw's *Et Ressurexit!* does not have more joy in its spontaneous triumph; that there is not more tonal depth and strength in the surges of the *Sanctus*. Nevertheless, Mr. Shaw and his well-disciplined forces, along their own particular lines, do a splendid job. The balance between chorus and orchestra, the precision of detail in the most complicated contrapuntal vortices, are not matters than can be just brushed aside.

Sometimes the cool and controlled Mr. Shaw, almost lets himself go and bows to the inspiration of the moment, as in his altogether inspiring *Cum sancto spiritu*, which closes the *Gloria*. Worthy of close scrutiny are the ineffably moving passages of the *Credo*—*Et incarnatus est* and *Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*. These are sung with true devotional spirit.

The soloists, in Bach generally, are of far less importance than the chorus. There is no exception here. Anne McKnight, soprano; June Gardner, soprano; Lydia Summers, contralto; Lucius Metz, tenor; and Paul Matthen, bass, are all skilled Bach vocalists. They have fine fresh voices, particularly Miss Summers and Mr. Matthen. Efficient as these singers are, they can be occasionally charged with a lack of true reverence, of a spirit that convinces because it springs from deep inwardness of feeling. But maybe we are

asking too much of people who make singing their bread-and-butter.

The various instrumental obligatos are unvaryingly cleanly performed, and all these forces—chorus, orchestra, soloists, harpsichord, instrumental accompanists—receive a mirror-like reproduction from RCA-Victor engineers, a marvel of clearness and balance.

And so, this much needed complete and up-to-date recording of what may well be the world's greatest musical creation, must be adjudged a distinct success.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Mendelssohn: Elijah, Op. 70. Huddersfield Choral Society, Isobel Baillie (soprano), Gladys Ripley (contralto), James Johnston (tenor), Harold Williams (bass-baritone), and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 16-12" discs in two albums, with libretto and case. Columbia Set MM-715. \$22.70.

Performances of Mendelssohn's massive and often impressive oratorio, *Elijah*, are infrequent today. If one hears them at all they are generally inadequate small-scale affairs that do not give the music the spacious treatment it requires. Therefore, this new complete performance is doubly welcome.

The same authoritative British sources which gave us a complete recording of Handel's *Messiah* last March, have again come forward. The Huddersfield Choral Society and the Liverpool Philharmonic under Sir Malcolm Sargent's knowledgeable beat again bear the chief brunt and responsibility, while the soloists, with the exception of the bass, which in this case is an admirable singer, Harold Williams, are the same as were used heretofore.

This is not the first complete recording of the oratorio. About 20 years ago or more, the BBC National Chorus and Orchestra, under Stanford Robinson, recorded the work with two of the soloists of the present set—Isobel Baillie and Harold Williams. However, although this set is still available, its technique of reproduction would be considered outmoded in the light of present-day accomplishment.

The recording of the present performance is on a big scale. It is clear and quite transparent and gives the impression of vast forces gathered together in true British style to sing the *Elijah*'s rousing choruses and well-fashioned solos. Columbia is issuing these albums in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Mendelssohn (November 4th, 1847). They were made during late May and early June of this year. Over thirty hours of recording sessions were employed as soloists, orchestra and conductor came from Liverpool and London to Huddersfield in distant Yorkshire for the occasion.

The Huddersfield Choral Society, an organization of 150 voices, sounds quite magnificent and at home in such great moments as *Thanks be to God!* and *Baal, We Cry to Thee!*, where the depth and volume of the singing are faithfully caught.

The soloists seem at times a little far from the microphones. Harold Williams, who sings the role of *Elijah*, and is considered one of England's greatest oratorio artists, is by far the outstanding solo figure. His singing of *Lord God of Abraham!* and the impressive *It is Enough* may well stand as a model for this type of singing. James Johnston's tenor copes easily but rather conventionally with *If With All Your Hearts*, while Gladys Ripley's contralto lacks solidity in the lower and lower-middle registers and has an anxious, fussy quality in its delivery. Nevertheless, Miss Ripley comes through with *Oh Rest in the Lord* in pleasing and sensitive fashion. Isobel Baillie, a great favorite in Britain, has one of those attenuated, disembodied voices that our English cousins rejoice in. Miss Baillie's tone is so thin and pure that she often suggests a choir-boy. Her singing of *Hear Ye, Israel!*, with its high, icy tones, carries a certain fascination of its own, and it is sung with style. The four soloists blend admirably together, when the occasion so dictates.

Over the whole performance towers the figure of Sir Malcolm Sargent, who surely knows what the music of the *Elijah* should sound like. It seems eminently fitting that England, the last and toughest stronghold of oratorio, should be responsible for this glowing and idiomatic performance.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

A Choral Concert (Songs of Faith). dePaur's Infantry Chorus conducted by Leonard dePaur. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-709. \$4.60.

One of the most remarkable musical groups to come out of World War II is dePaur's Infantry Chorus, which makes its recording debut this month. The thirty-six members were in the 372nd Regiment and during the war gave over two thousand concerts for GIs both at home and abroad. After demobilization, Captain dePaur kept his group together, and at the present time they are on a very successful concert tour that will take them well over the United States.

For its first album, the chorus sings nine great works, representing the deeply felt songs of many faiths. These include the traditional Jewish *Eli, Eli* (arranged by dePaur), Owen Da Silva's *The Blessing of St. Francis*, Paul Creston's *Here Is Thy Footstool*; two pieces of dramatic Russian liturgical music, *Hospodi Polmilui* by Lvovsky and *Bless the Lord, O My Soul* by Ippolitov-Ivanov; dePaur's arrangement of the traditional *Deep River*, Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer*, and two profound Palestrina chorals: *O Bone Jesu* and *Adoramus Te, Christe*.

The unusual feature of this chorus is the wide variety of their offerings; it would seem that they can do quite well most anything in the whole choral category. These recordings show unlimited rehearsals and hours upon hours of careful direction by their able leader. We found this album most interesting and do not hesitate to urge our readers to

investigate it. The reproduction is fine throughout and the record surfaces quiet.

Berlin: The Freedom Train. One side, and **Ward—arr. Shaw: America the Beautiful.** RCA Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-10" disc (V-10-1368). 79c.

This timely release of Irving Berlin's selection written in honor of the Freedom Train, which is at present making its tour of the country, should find a ready market. The RCA Victor Chorale, under the brilliant direction of Robert Shaw, gives a spirited interpretation—one that should make the heart of every true American beat just a little bit faster. Shaw's arrangement of *America the Beautiful* makes a very fitting companion piece.

VOCAL



Cantorial Chants. (Sung in Hebrew). Moshe Kusevitsky (tenor) with String Ensemble conducted by Joseph M. Rumshinsky. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set S-52. \$4.20.

Moshe Kusevitsky is surely one of the outstanding cantors of the world. He is known in the United States because of a tour which took him to many of the most important synagogues shortly before World War II. He conducted the last Yom Kippur services in an underground shelter in Warsaw on the eve of the Nazi occupation. He was captured but later escaped to Russian territory and for the balance of the war toured the battlefronts giving concerts for the Russian soldiers. At present he is planning another tour of the United States under the direction of William Morris, Jr.

At the age of twenty-eight Kusevitsky was elected high cantor of the great Synagogue of Warsaw in competition with some 200 other cantors. He succeeded there the aged Cantor Gershon Sirota, who was considered in his day the greatest of them all.

The selections which Cantor Kusevitsky has chosen for this fine album are: *Hatei; Leolom Jehej Odom; Unsane Tokéf; and Ribojnoj Szel Oslom.*

Kol Nidrei (arr. Russotto). (Sung in Hebrew). One side, and **A Plea to God** (arr. Low-Baron-Bass). (Sung in Yiddish). Jan Peerce (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Warner Bass. 1-12" disc (V-11-9760). \$1.05.

While this disc will appeal especially to the Jewish people, it is not necessary to be of that faith to appreciate and enjoy its great musical quality. Purely from the musical standpoint it is a worth while addition to any library of records. Jan Peerce sings as well as we have ever heard him and he is supported by a most excellent chorus—all in all this is a disc that we can recommend very highly.

Brother James' Air (arr. Jacob). One side, and **Handel: Judas Maccabeus—O Lovely Peace.** Boys' duet (choristers of St. Nicholas College) with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 190). \$2.10.

A month or so ago, we mentioned editorially the group of records that had been issued in England known as The Royal School of Church Music Records and offered to send a list of them to anyone interested. From the number of requests we received we judge that an appreciable number of our readers are interested in English Church Music. With this in mind, and because of the fact that many of these records will doubtless be of interest to all music lovers who delight in sacred music beautifully sung, we will from time to time list them in the body of our bulletin. The disc listed above is just such a record. It contains two lovely anthems sung as a duet by two boys from the choir of St. Nicolas College, Chislehurst, England. These recordings, with their charming organ accompaniments, were made in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, London. This disc is unique in its charm and loveliness and we do not hesitate to recommend it most highly.

An Igor Gorin Program. Igor Gorin (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1125. \$3.42.

Igor Gorin sings the selections in this group in his best operatic manner, and his many fans will doubtless be delighted with the renditions. The following pieces are included in the present album: *Dark Eyes; The Volga Legend; At Dawning; One Alone; Play Gypsies, Dance Gypsies; and Song of the Open Road.* The last two selections were released on a single disc sometime ago.

Schubert: Serenade (Standchen) (Schwanengesang No. 4). One side, and **Schubert: Dem Unendlichen.** (Sung in German.) Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Ignace Strassfogel. 1-10" disc (C-17509D). \$1.

We are glad to see that the great artist, Lauritz Melchior, has turned away from the silly stuff of his films to do something more worthy of his fine talent. Music lovers generally, we are sure, will join us in hailing his lovely renditions of these Schubert songs. They have been splendidly recorded.

Trenet: La Mer. One side, and **Trenet: Marie, Marie.** (Sung in French). Charles Trenet (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Albert Lasry. 1-10" disc (C-4499M). \$1.

Charles Trenet has quite a following among that sophisticated group known as "café society," and each new record by this talented artist has a limited market awaiting it. The present release is quite clever and a welcome addition to his recorded repertory.

Beloved Irish Melodies. John Henry Griffin (tenor) with organ accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Halligan Studios Set G-1. \$3.99.

John Henry Griffin, tenor soloist at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, New York City, is a typical Irish tenor and the selections he has chosen for this album are just as Irish as he is. His diction is perfect—every word of every song comes out crystal clear. The Irish are a very sentimental race and they like to revel in the sentiment of their Ballads. Griffin recognizes this and makes each song easily understood. If Irish ballads you are after, here's a grand album of them. The organ accompaniments are not too strong; they were apparently made on a small cottage organ.

The selections in this album are: *Macushla; Wearing of the Green; Danny Boy; I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen; Rose of Tralee; and Ninepenny Fiddle.*

VIOLIN



Sarasate: Zepateado. One side, and **Castelnuovo-Tedesco**—trans. Heifetz: *Sea Murmurs* and *Rimsky-Korsakov*—trans. Heifetz: *The Bumblebee*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-10" disc (V-10-1328). 79¢.

Little encore pieces, that give Heifetz opportunities to display his rare technique and the beauty of his marvelous tone, make this a disc that any lover of fine violin music may readily enjoy. Reproduction—excellent.

Debussy—trans. Hartmann: *La Fille aux cheveux de lin*. One side, and **Falla**—trans. Kochanski: *Jota*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-10" disc (V-10-1324). 79¢.

This record brings together on one disc two selections that appeared previously on other records, which have been dropped from the RCA Victor catalog. We are glad to see these little gems back again. Heifetz has used both of these pieces as encores many times and there is a continued demand for them.

Heifetz Encores. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1158. \$4.20.

Heifetz is noted for the unusual and charming little pieces that he selects for his encores. The present album contains a generous selection of these fascinating compositions. His concert fans will doubtless be eager to possess this collection and other music lovers, especially those who are interested in lovely violin recordings, will find this a most rewarding item. The soloist and the accompanist are both in top form, and the reproduction is excellent.

The selections that Mr. Heifetz has chosen for this album are: Debussy *Il pleure dans mon coeur*; Poldowsky: *Tango*; Bach: *Gavottes I and II* (from English Suite No. 6); Beethoven: *Folk Dance*; Falla: *Pantomime* (from *El Amor Brujo*); Nin: *Cantilena Asturiana*; Milhaud: *Corcovado* (from *Saudades do Brasil*); Arensky: *Tempo di valse*; and Mendelssohn: *Scherzo* (from Piano Trio No. 1, in D minor). Several of these selections have been arranged by Mr. Heifetz for violin and piano.

PIANO



Franck: Variations Symphoniques. Eileen Joyce (piano) with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-35. \$5.25.

This set is easily superior to previous recordings, if for nothing more than the superior reproduction. As a performer, Eileen Joyce has enjoyed a fine reputation with a large following in this country from many previous recordings, and is known by collectors as a dependable interpreter. To this must be added the authoritative accompaniment of Charles Münch, currently conducting the New York Philharmonic with great success, for the second season. Together they have recorded a memorable performance of this charming music, beautifully reflective in the many lovely passages Franck created, sensitive and refined, but not slushy. The climaxes are realized with genuine strength, and the reproduction throughout is exceptional. Previously, we have preferred the well phrased performance by Gieseking (Col. MX-10), and it remains a beautiful conception of the work. However, it is quite aged in matters of reproduction and we are forced to bid it farewell.

For those unfamiliar with the *Symphonic Variations* we suggest an early hearing, for this melodious piece falls easily on the ears and wears well over a period of time. Its brevity is a point in favor, for Franck is known to be repetitious. In this work we find Franck at his best, the variations are interesting and he has woven the piano and orchestra together with great skill. We welcome this release warmly and recommend it highly. S.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). Rudolph Serkin (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-711. \$4.60.

Last year Artur Schnabel made a fine recording of this well-known Beethoven sonata for RCA Victor and it met with substantial acclaim and enjoyed a large sale. When we reviewed it we called attention to the other splendid versions by Artur Schnabel and Walter Gieseking, mentioning our personal preference for the Schnabel recording. There is no question of the outstanding ability of the four great pianists who have made recordings of the "Appassionata,"

and the final answer will probably be that each music lover will select the version that best suits his individual taste. We'll register our vote as follows: first, Schnabel, and then in the following order, Gieseeking, Serkin and Rubinstein. Having done that, we declare the ballot box open and let everyone make his own choice.

Debussy: Preludes, Book II. E. Robert Schmitz (piano). 6-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1138. \$5.78.

Two other pianists have made recordings of these twelve preludes, Walter Gieseeking and Robert Casadesus, and in each case their album received enthusiastic praise in this publication. Schmitz certainly rates with these fine pianists and his album deserves high recommendation too. It would take a more profound Debussy scholar than the present writer to analyze these various versions and it would in all probability resolve itself largely into a matter of personal taste. Our best advice is for the interested reader to make his own comparison.

Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35. Five sides, and **Chopin: Mazurka in A minor, Op. 17, No. 4.** Robert Casadesus (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-698. \$4.60.

It seems hardly necessary to have another recording of Chopin's "Funeral March" sonata, despite its great popularity, after the definitive recording that was made for Victor by Artur Rubinstein, which was released in January of this year. We can hardly imagine anyone preferring the present rendition. However, Robert Casadesus is a fine artist and has a large and enthusiastic following in America, and among his many friends, there will be a sizable group who will at least wish to hear his version of this well-known Chopin work. It is now available for their investigation.

Lecuona—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: Malagueña. One side, and **Gould—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: Guaracha** (Latin American Symphonette). Whittemore and Lowe (pianos). 1-12" disc (V-11-9759). \$1.05.

Whittemore and Lowe have made lively arrangements of these two selections. If you like two piano music of this character, you'll probably think this a great record. If you're not familiar with this two-piano team, you had better hear this one before you buy it. It is one of those discs that you either like very much or you would not have it as a gift. The reproduction has been successfully accomplished.

Liszt: Second Hungarian Rhapsody. First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-46-0011). \$1.05.

We suppose a lot of persons will think this is a swell record—everybody hasn't heard the Hungarian Rhapsody as many times as this reviewer. These four pia-

nists certainly make it sound like something—to us much of it sounds like a hurdy-gurdy, but we admit that we are prejudiced. The best that we can say for it is that the reproduction is "tops."

Levant Plays Debussy. Oscar Levant (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-710. \$5.85.

When it comes to Debussy, Oscar Levant is not an Alfred Cortot nor a Walter Gieseeking, but he is a talented pianist and we feel that he has accomplished very acceptable performances of these lovely selections from the pen of that great French impressionist. We might mention that Levant's interpretation leans toward the conception of Cortot rather than toward that of Gieseeking.

The selections are: *Reflets dans l'eau*; *La soirée dans Grenade*; *General Lavine—Eccentric* (Prelude No. 6, Book II); *Minstrels* (Prelude No. 12, Book I); *La cathédrale engloutie*; *Serenade for the Doll*; *The Little Shepherd*; *La plus que lente—valse*; *Arabesque No. 1 in E major*; and *Arabesque No. 2 in G major*.

Chopin: Ballade No. 3 in A flat, Op. 47. Guiomar Novaes (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72345D). \$1.25.

Guiomar Novaes, who is at the present time having a most successful concert tour in this country, offers a beautiful rendition of the well-known Chopin piece. Any number of previous recordings are available of this selection but we are sure that Miss Novaes' performance rates with the best of them.

Falla: Ritual Fire Dance. One side, and **Falla: Dance of Terror.** (Both from "El Amor Brujo"). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1326). 79c.

Rubinstein made a record containing these two selections a number of years ago and it enjoys a continued popularity. RCA Victor probably thought that it rated a modern version, thus we have this new disc. These little pieces are popular and Rubinstein plays them to the Queen's taste.

Schumann: Arabesque, Op. 18. José Iturbi (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1325). 79c.

Here is a charming rendition of this beautiful little Schumann piece. The piano reproduction is of the best.

Concerto Themes. (Liszt Concerto No. 1 and Schumann Concerto, arr. by Whittemore and Lowe). Whittemore and Lowe (pianos). 1-12" disc (V-11-9771). \$1.05.

Whittemore and Lowe have taken themes from these two popular concertos and with these themes as a starting point they proceed to wander all over their two pianos. It may appeal to some persons, but to us much of it sounded like a piano salesman running over an instrument to demonstrate it for a prospective customer. The Schumann arrangement was a bit more interesting than the Liszt one, but we

doubt if the serious music lover will find either of much value. The piano reproduction is particularly excellent.

Brahms: Intermezzo No. 13 in A, Op. 118, No. 2. One side, and **Brahms: Waltz No. 15 in A flat, Op. 39** and **Schumann: Traumerei, Op. 15, No. 7.** Oscar Levant (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72372D). \$1.25.

Oscar Levant has selected three short selections for this disc that are featured in the new film based on the life of Robert Schumann entitled "Song of Love." With the publicity that the picture will give these pieces, the present record should enjoy a reasonably wide sale. Mr. Levant plays all of them most graciously in the best of taste. We are glad to recommend this disc to all those who like tuneful piano music played in a modest style without undue sentimentality.

DICTION



Dickens: The Adventures of Oliver Twist and Fagin. Basil Rathbone, with supporting cast. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-700. \$4.60.

Basil Rathbone with the aid of an excellent supporting cast brings to life on these records Oliver Twist, Fagin, the Artful Dodger and many of the other characters in Dickens' famous story. The production has been skillfully worked out with the aid of music and sound effects and students of Dickens will, we believe, feel that a very worth while recording has been accomplished. Dickens was always interested in things theatrical and gave many readings from his books on the lecture platform. We rather feel that he would be highly elated with this recorded version of his story if he were here to listen to these discs.

Wilde: The Importance of Being Earnest—Scene from Act I. One side, and **Wilde: Lady Windermere's Fan—Scene from Act III.** John Gielgud, with supporting casts. 1-12" disc in envelope (D-DU-90012). \$2.10.

These scenes from two revivals, that recently have been most successful on the New York stage, with John Gielgud and excellent supporting actors, will be interesting souvenirs of these performances. As examples of fine diction they will also be of interest to English scholars. The recording has been nicely achieved on an unbreakable 12-inch disc.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Dmitri Shostakovich: The Man and His Work. By Ivan Martynov. Translated from the Russian by T. Guralsky. 197 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$2.75.

Relax and Listen: How to Enjoy Music Through Records. By John Hallstrom xv+272 pp. Rinehart and Company, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.50.

New Guide to Recorded Music (Revised Edition). By Irving Kolodin. xxi+382 pp. Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibiotone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IROC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, HW—Hargail, MU—Muscraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofonken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 15. NO. 10

DECEMBER 1947

By mail to any address
50c. per year

ONE of the most important shipments of records from abroad just arrived. It contained a few copies of all the records issued in France by the Lyrebird Press. These discs are known as L'Oiseau-Lyre records, and before World War II a few small shipments of them were made to selected dealers, just enough to whet the appetite of discerning collectors. Then the war came along and all shipments stopped. We now learn that the masters were stored in the garage of the proprietor of the Lyrebird Press, Mrs. Louise B. M. Dyer, just before she fled from Paris. Upon Mrs. Dyer's return after the war, she found them unharmed, just as she had left them. A faithful French servant, who remained to look after the property, had fooled the Germans into believing that the master records were the property of a collaborationist, and so they left them alone. This is indeed good news, for many of these recordings could not be replaced.

The Lyrebird Press was subsidized by Mrs. Dyer for the purpose of printing and making available important compositions of early composers that were not presently in any publisher's catalog. Much of the material was in manuscript and seemingly endless research was necessary to accomplish Mrs. Dyer's aim. After this music was published, it occurred to Mrs. Dyer, that it would be an excellent idea to make recordings of it available, so that students and music lovers could do more than look at the music; they could hear it. Prominent musicians were interested in this project and the results achieved were excellent. All of the compositions were rendered in the spirit of the times in which they were composed. Thus L'Oiseau-Lyre records came into being. They include both vocal and instrumental music from the 13th to the 19th century, inclusive.

A limited number of a very nicely printed 28-page catalog is available for distribution to

schools, conservatories, or interested individuals. A request for the L'Oiseau-Lyre catalog sent to the publishers of this bulletin will bring a copy gratis. As there are no prices in this catalog, please remember that the 10-inch discs are \$1.60 each and the 12-inch are \$2.10 each. These prices included all taxes.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

This tome of over 700 pages contains the program of every opera presented by the resident company at the Metropolitan Opera House from the inaugural night, 22 October 1883 through the 1946-47 season. It also includes 127 photographs (many of them rare and hitherto unpublished) of the great stars of that famous company. Of particular interest are the hundreds of excerpts from the most important newspaper critiques of each season, which will be found at the close of the chapter devoted to that season. What such critics as Henry Krehbiel of the *New York Tribune* and W. J. Henderson of the *New York Sun* had to say about the first performances of many operas, and the debut of singers who afterwards became famous, makes fascinating reading for all opera lovers. At Caruso's debut, Henderson said, "Mr. Caruso, the new tenor, made a thoroughly favorable impression, and will probably grow in favor with the public," and Krehbiel said, "*Rigoletto* is not a tenor's opera . . . but Signor Caruso, the new-comer, did what he could to make it so." Guess Caruso did not hesitate to take the center of the stage, if he could, right from the beginning of his career with the Metropolitan.

If you are interested in opera in America,

you may spend many, many happy hours with this great volume, which has been most diligently compiled by Mr. Seltsam. Those who have been attending the Metropolitan for many years will delight in the pictures of their favorite artists, many of whom have passed on, and are merely names to the present younger generation of opera goers. A very carefully prepared index makes this a fine book of reference.

Twentieth Century Music. (A new edition, completely revised). By Marion Bauer. xiv+463 pp. G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York). Price \$5.

The first edition of Miss Bauer's book has been in our library since it was published in 1933 and we have referred to it many times through the years. We were therefore particularly interested in the present new edition. It contains over one hundred more pages and includes several new chapters. Of special interest to us is the chapter on The New Aesthetic which covers the effect of World War II, the phonograph, the radio, motion pictures, and the ballet on modern music.

We particularly like Miss Bauer's sane approach to her subject. She logically traces the development of present-day music from its sources in the works of Debussy, Ravel, Griffes and others, and she states her case without unduly attempting to convince us that everything that is modern is good. She leaves that decision to her readers.

For those who would like to have a better understanding of modern music so that they may the better enjoy it, this book is highly recommended. As it has been most fully indexed, it is of value as a book of reference.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of *The New Records*. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 130 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Offenbach—arr. and orch. by Rosenthal: *Gaité Parisienne*—Ballet. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1147. \$5.25.

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker Ballet, Op. 71—Five Dances (Suite No. 2). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1164. \$3.15.

Here is the RCA Victor Christmas present to phonophiles, in the form of two brand new first recordings of delightful ballet bon bons. *Gaité Parisienne* is given its first full recording—the complete score as performed by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. This work was compiled and orchestrated by Manuel Rosenthal from various stage works of Offenbach including *Orpheus in Hades*, *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*. The story of the ballet is a fluffy affair which serves as a vehicle for the various waltzes, galops, polkas, quadrilles, cancons, etc. that comprise the score. A previous recording of excerpts from this racy score by Efreim Kurtz and the London Philharmonic (Col. MX-115) has been a great favorite and best seller for years. Whether or not the new complete version by Fiedler will prove more popular remains to be seen. For us, a little of this music goes a long way, enjoyable as it is at the moment. For those who relish this sort of fare and do not become satiated with four sides of it, here is an eight-sided set to provide a full half-hour of zippy music. Fiedler does it up to the handle, and the reproduction is razor sharp.

What the recording world has unquestionably needed for at least a decade is something new in Nutcracker Suites—and here it is. We have here five heretofore unrecorded sections from the *Nutcracker Ballet*. What we know as the *Nutcracker Suite* is the suite of excerpts which Tchaikovsky extracted from the score and conducted with great success before the premiere of the ballet itself. It is the only concert arrangement Tchaikovsky ever made from his ballets. We must agree with him that he certainly knew what he was doing when he made the *Nutcracker Suite*. Millions have loved it and acclaimed it, and all because he selected the cream of the various numbers which make up the complete score. The five excerpts here recorded, which form a "Second Suite," in no way compare to the "first" suite. True, they have an appeal, and are thoroughly Tchaikovsky through and through; but they are not the immediately appealing fall-easy-on-the-ear Tchaikovsky of the original suite.

Fiedler does nobly with the music and is recorded with fine clarity and brilliance. You should hear this set and judge its appeal for yourself. The "new" Nutcracker Suite is here. S.

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet—Romeo's Reverie, Fete at the Capulets, and Love Scene. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1160. \$4.20. Also available on vinylite records: DV-7. \$7.35.

A fine modern recording of Berlioz' *Romeo and Juliet*, or any of its parts, is indeed welcome. Toscanini has given us one of his best albums in this nearly complete recording of Part Two of the great dramatic symphony based on Shakespeare's drama. It is too bad that the *Queen Mab* Scherzo could not be included, but the recording was rejected by Toscanini, and the manufacturer promises the release of *Queen Mab* on a single record at an early date. Also omitted are the brief choral passages, which might easily have been included just to make this a complete job. However, we are thankful for the set as it stands. Part Two of *Romeo and Juliet* is, with the choral exceptions noted, for orchestra alone, and thus it lends itself well to concert performances.

The famous *Love Scene*, so dear to Berlioz, is recorded for the first time. Toscanini performs this music with surpassing beauty and insight. It is an eloquent setting of the balcony scene from Shakespeare's drama. Of the several previous recordings of *Romeo's Reverie* and *Fete at the Capulets*, the present one easily supercedes them. From the standpoint of reproduction this set is very fine indeed for tonal quality and balance. The album is also highly recommended for the music itself. We urge everyone to make its acquaintance, for it is music that wears well with repeated hearings. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1161. \$7.35. Also available on vinylite records: DV-8. \$13.65.

Whenever a masterpiece of the immense proportions and soaring emotional content of the *Eroica* Symphony is performed, the camps are sharply divided as to whether the interpreter did full justice to the score. A conductor's approach, his ability to reveal the contents, and in a sense to create (or recreate) the complexities of such a score offer many opportunities and choices. Five great conductors now have recordings of the *Eroica* available and each one meets one test completely: his version is convincing. Taking each performance separately, we can enjoy it and receive an inspiration from it. How then, can a critic or reviewer match one version with another, state a preference, or name the best one?

One way to help name a choice in recordings is to consider the merits of the reproduction. From that standpoint the present set by Koussevitzky ranks highest, only because the echo present in this set is not quite as long and smeary as the echo present in the recent set by Victor de Sabata and the London Philharmonic (EDA-19). From there on we put it this

way: Toscanini's poorly recorded set is in many spots too mechanically precise and taut; Walter's set is still the most eloquent and warm-hearted; Weingartner is scholarly and just, and at times powerful, but not of present-day recording standards. Koussevitzky, whose older set for Victor is now replaced by this new one, is easily the most dynamic, with every dramatic possibility realized with a minimum of distortion. His eloquence is more dramatic than Walter's and not quite as warm. Sabata's reading is the most careful and deliberate and scales great heights; but is not as electrifying as Koussevitzky or Walter.

Victor was wise to issue a new *Eroica* by Koussevitzky, and they have provided what will be to many the best recorded *Eroica*. We would not argue their choice, for Koussevitzky surpasses himself in this set. S.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1148. \$7.35.

Years ago, when Ormandy was conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony, he made a recording of this work. The recording was none too good—it lacked proper balance. In 1945, Rodzinski, with the Philharmonic-Symphony, gave a brilliant reading, but the reproduction was not all that one might wish. In the present set, we have dynamic direction plus the best of modern reproduction. Thus we have a recording of one of Rachmaninoff's finest compositions that should prove highly satisfactory.

Rachmaninoff was 33 when he began writing his *Symphony No. 2*. He had retired to Dresden in 1906, to escape the social life, as well as his operatic duties in Moscow, and he now gave himself entirely to composition. A piano sonata, the tone poem *Isle of the Dead*, and the present symphony, were achieved during these two years of self-imposed exile. The *Symphony No. 2* was presented to the public for the first time in February 8, 1908, after the composer had returned to Russia.

Mr. Philip Hale, distinguished Boston critic, made the following penetrating appraisal of the symphony: "The reasons for the popularity of this symphony are not far to seek. The themes are eminently melodious, and some of them are of singular beauty; there is rich coloring: there are beautiful nuances in color; there is impressive sonority; there are frequent and sharp contrasts in sentiment, rhythm, expression; there is stirring vitality."

Ravel: Bolero. L'Orchestre de la Société du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-33. \$5.25.

"For the first time in my life, I really liked the *Bolero*," said this reviewer to his wife after playing Münch's revelation of the score. Several repeated playings later did not alter the first impression. For one

thing (and the most important), Münch takes four sides, four well filled 12" sides, to record *Bolero* instead of the customary three sides. The correct tempo as Ravel himself conducted this work is considerably slower than we usually hear it. Previous recordings by Coppola and Mengelberg, as well as the old Ravel set on Polydor which was recently reissued by Vox, took four sides because of the proper tempo. But the most popular recordings by Koussevitzky, Fiedler, Kostelanetz, Stokowski, *et al* are all at a stepped up tempo.

All of this business about the tempo is the principal reason for the superiority of Münch's marvelous recording. The skillful instrumentation which Ravel conceived is given a chance to bloom; and under Münch's exceedingly skillful direction the definition and balance reveal the music perfectly. The Paris Conservatory Orchestra plays with great proficiency and the performance is free from the weird mistakes and blue notes that one hears in nearly every performance of this work. Recorded at the Walthamstow Assembly Hall, this set lacks the echo present in some EDA recordings made there. Everyone may take a bow for this recording: Münch, for an exceptional exhibition of conducting; the orchestra, for virtuoso playing, and Decca, for fine reproduction and surfaces. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G ("Surprise") (Salomon No. 3). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1155. \$4.20.

Koussevitzky's earlier recording of this work has been listed in the RCA Victor catalog for nearly twenty years and during all that time has enjoyed a steady sale. Thus this modern version may very easily slip into that seat of honor and be very welcome. There is only one other domestic recording of this symphony available. It is a very nice one made by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony under Howard Barlow in 1939. The present new one by Koussevitzky will doubtless be the choice of the great majority of music lovers.

Haydn's "Surprise" is a lovely little symphony, and if it is not presently in your library, we suggest that you give it consideration the next time you are selecting records.

Prokofiev: Classical Symphony in D, Op. 25. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-287. \$3.35.

We cannot believe it possible for anybody to be immune to the light-hearted gaiety and the mischievous humor of this all too short first of Prokofiev's five symphonies. From the tongue-in-the-cheek pompousness of the first movement, the *Peter and the Wolf* quips in the third movement, to the "all-in" Finale, the *Classical Symphony* displays all of Prokofiev's

humor and his superb musicianship.

Apparently the present version by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra will take the place of the older recording by the Minneapolis Symphony under Mitropoulos, which has been a good seller in Columbia's catalog for the last six or seven years. Mitropoulos has recently gone over to RCA Victor.

Ormandy does a splendid job, and so if Columbia discontinues the Mitropoulos recording, a very satisfactory version will be still available.

Waltzing with Romberg. Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1154. \$4.20.

If you like waltzes beautifully played with sparkle and in just the proper spirit, you'll select this album in a hurry. Romberg does a great job in a field in which he is outstanding. RCA Victor has supplied fine recording and records with smooth surfaces. This group of discs is recommended for a lot of pleasant listening.

The selections are: *Merry Widow*; *Blossom Time*; *Vienna Beauties*; *Viennese Nights*; *Student Prince*; *Vienna Life*; and *Emperor Waltz*.

Respighi: The Fountains of Rome. Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6448 and V-DB-6449). \$5.25.

The most recent former recording of this exciting work was made by the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York under Bärbiroli in 1939. It was a good performance but it lacks the brilliance of this superb version directed by Victor de Sabata. The Italian recorders have achieved a marvelous recording, thus, we do not hesitate to give this pair of discs the highest praise.

Thomas: Raymond—Overture. City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-12" disc (C-72374D). \$1.25.

This recording does not compare with the outstanding one made by the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel for English Decca (D-K-1299). That disc was made available in this country several months ago. Of course, the present disc is only about one-half the price of the Decca *ffrr* recording. In our opinion, the more expensive record is worth its price.

Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani—Overture. Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Victor de Sabata. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6444). \$2.63.

About all that most of us remember about Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani* is the beautiful overture, which more painlessly presents the emotions of the plot than the long and macabre opera itself. This recent recording made in Italy makes available an excellent rendition of it, and we do not hesitate to recommend it.

Williams: Fantasia on Greensleeves. One side, and **Grainger: Handel in the Strand (Clog Dance).** The Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (D-K-1216). \$2.10.

The Boyd Neel players give lovely little performances of two pleasing selections that are popular with English audiences. We found both pieces quite fascinating and do not hesitate to recommend them to those who would like tuneful music that is out of the ordinary. They have been splendidly recorded by English Decca.

Weber—arr. Berlioz: Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65. The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (D-K-1108). \$2.10.

There have been numerous recordings made of this popular selection but we doubt if any of them will be more satisfying than the present one. The National Symphony Orchestra (England) is heard to advantage under the brilliant direction of Fistoulari, and the English Decca *ffrr* reproduction is something at which to marvel.

Dinner at the Waldorf. Mischa Borr and his Waldorf-Astoria Concert Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-175. \$3.57.

Dinner music in the refined and artistic style of Mischa Borr—a wide variety of selections, some of them quite well-known and others that will be new to most listeners—all superbly played and nicely recorded by RCA Victor. Here is a lovely collection of pleasing melodies for the quiet-hour.

CONCERTO



Khachaturian: Violin Concerto. Louis Kaufman (violin) with the Santa Monica Symphony conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 4-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AN. \$9.45.

Until the beginning of the present year the name of Khachaturian meant very little to those interested in recorded music. Then two excellent recordings of his Piano Concerto were made available, and record collectors realized that in Aram Khachaturian the modern world had a composer of great stature and one of real importance. Repeated calls for a recording of his Violin Concerto were heard on all sides, for that work was appearing on the programs of many of the more prominent symphony orchestras. Concert Hall Society very likely heard these calls and the present recording was made, and we are more than happy to report that it is an eminently satisfactory one. Louis Kaufman, whose technical ability has received the highest praise, is well fitted for the task of playing this brilliant work—he plays every phrase as if he were truly enjoying it—and has fine

support from the Santa Monica Symphony under the distinguished direction of Jacques Rachmilovich. The only criticism that we can offer is that it appears that in recording this selection too much prominence was given the soloist; at times the orchestra seems to be rather far away in the background.

Unquestionably we shall hear more and more of Khachaturian and so a short biographical sketch might be of interest to our readers. He was born in Tiflis, Armenia in 1904. Apparently he did not have much musical instruction until he was nineteen, and then he presented himself at Michail Gnesin's music school in Moscow with nothing much but the will to learn. He was admitted and remained there until 1929, when he left to study at the Moscow State Conservatory. There he studied composition under Miaskovsky and orchestration under Vassilenko and Ivanov-Radkevich. He graduated in 1934; his diploma work was his First Symphony which was composed in honor of the Sovietization of Armenia. His Piano Concerto appeared in the next year (1935). Then followed his *Poem about Stalin* (1938), the ballet *Happiness* (1939) and the present Violin Concerto in 1940. The Violin Concerto was first heard in America in 1942, played by Miriam Solovieff with piano accompaniment at a concert in Town Hall, New York. It was first heard with the orchestral part in a Columbia Broadcasting System concert with the same soloist on November 1, 1944. The U.S.S.R. has awarded Khachaturian many honors, among them the Order of Lenin and a First Degree Stalin Prize. R.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1159. \$5.25.

Six or seven years ago RCA Victor issued a recording of this work by Horowitz and the NBC Symphony under the direction of Toscanini and it proved to be one of the largest selling albums ever issued—it still enjoys a substantial sale. It is reported that Rubinstein has always been anxious to make a new recording of this concerto, which he made a great number of years ago in England with the London Symphony conducted by Barbirolli, and we suppose that that is the reason for this new version. We can see no other reason. Rubinstein may give a more poetic reading but the Horowitz performance has been pretty generally acclaimed as an excellent one, and the superb orchestral support given him by the NBC Symphony under the brilliant direction of Toscanini is out and beyond that which Mitropoulos and the Minneapolis players afford Rubinstein. The orchestral support definitely tips the scales in favor of the older version, at least it does in our opinion.

OPERA



Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Love Duet (Act II, Scene 2). (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano), Torsten Ralf (tenor), Herta Glaz (contralto), with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fritz Busch. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-286. \$3.35.

For over four hours, on the afternoon of March 16, 1947, Helen Traubel, Torsten Ralf, Herta Glaz and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under the direction of Fritz Busch, gathered on the stage of the Metropolitan in New York to make a recording of the *Liebesnacht* from Richard Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde." This was in many ways an historic occasion, for it marked the first time that records had ever been made from the actual stage of the 39th and Broadway auditorium. It was the first recording made under the then new, exclusive and much publicized contract between Columbia Recording Corporation and the Metropolitan Opera Association.

The results of this momentous gathering are now made available to the record-buying public. We are informed that each of the four sides that go to make up the recording were sung from two to seven times over, during that afternoon.

What we hear is a very clear, admirably balanced, but not especially inspired performance of this matchless music. Both Mme. Traubel and Mr. Ralf get off to a poor start. There are moments when the absolute purity of their intonation is open to question, and Mme. Traubel's vibrato is so wide that it could almost be classed as a wobble. However, from the second side to the end, the admired American soprano does some of the most glorious singing she has put on records, concluding the scene with a well achieved high B. All that is best in this singer's art can be heard on these last three recording sides.

Mr. Ralf's voice sounds veiled and thin in quality. Nor is his particular grey tone-color especially suitable for the publication of romantic or passionate sentiments. He is rather overwhelmed by his heroic partner, and one has to come to a final estimate of his work as being just acceptable routine. Miss Glaz, barring a moment of flatness, gives *Brangaene's* Warning with artistic results, though without great beauty of tone.

Mr. Busch is an experienced conductor, and his authority over the very clearly reproduced orchestra, is apparent at all times. Ultimate ecstasy is apparently not his.

The recording begins with *O sink hernieder Nacht*. The entrance of Tristan, which would have seemed like a logical start, is avoided, no doubt because of Mme. Traubel's reluctance to have her inability to deal with the two high C's perpetuated on wax. A

section generally cut at the Metropolitan, beginning with *Tag und Tod mit gleichen Streichen*, is however presented with a cut of its own. Mme. Traubel does some exquisitely beautiful work in this section. The recording then runs on to the entrance of King Mark.

This is in every way a recording worthy of respect. Undoubtedly, persons with extensive operatic collections, should investigate it for its fine qualities as well as for its historical aura. However, for ultimate tension and ecstasy of feeling the recording by Frieda Leider and Lauritz Melchior with Albert Coates as conductor is still the answer to this scene's particular demands. Very naturally a recording made in 1929 cannot compare with one made in 1947, if reproduction and clarity are to be considered.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Madamina, il catalogo (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Joel Berglund (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. 1-10" disc (V-10-1346). 79c.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Barcarola: Pescator, affonda l'esca (Act II). One side, and Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*—Prologo: Si può? Un nido di memorie (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel and Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9790). \$1.05.

Verdi: La Traviata—Di Provenza il mar (Act II). (Sung in Italian). One side, and Bizet: *Carmen*—1. Chorus, 2. Song of the Toreador, 3. Exit of the Toreador (Act II). (Sung in French). Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel and Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (V-11-9794). \$1.05.

These three baritone records add up to a lot of heavy dough. Taking them in alphabetical order, we first have Joel Berglund, who makes his American debut on records. This singer, known to Metropolitan Opera audiences for his Kurwenal, Wotan, and Hans Sachs, is curiously enough here presented singing a bass air in Italian. The artist's conception of Leporello's *Catalogue Aria* from "Don Giovanni" is lacking in humor and elasticity, though it is vocally solid and secure. Mr. Berglund's Italian is excellent but he proves a pretty stolid Leporello. An orchestra under Leo Blech (recorded in England) sounds first-rate.

Robert Merrill, going back to the role of his debut at the Metropolitan, presents *Di Provenza il mar* from "Traviata." This popular but monotonous Verdi aria is only palatable when sung with the greatest artistry and virtuosity (hear Giuseppe de Luca's record!). Mr. Merrill has a fine, dark, massive voice, but his singing allows for little nuance, and he cannot "play" with the voice as he should in such a selection. At its best this is a straightforward per-

formance backed by well produced but monotonous tone.

If you think Berglund and Merrill dark and unyielding, you must get down on an even lower step for an appraisal of Leonard Warren's opaque voice in what should be a particularly sparkling page from Ponchielli's "La Gioconda." The *Barcarola* is perhaps the only carefree, brilliant moment of this sombre score, but Mr. Warren sounds tubby and pontifical, despite his unquestioned vocal resources. A chorus, trained by Robert Shaw, tries its hand at grand opera.

On the reverse of the Merrill and Warren records are selections already reviewed in these columns. Merrill backs his with the Treador Song from "Carmen" (with chorus), taken from the album of "Carmen Highlights" (VM-1078), while Warren couples the Prologue from "Pagliacci," which has already appeared in Victor's "Treasury of Grand Opera." (VM-1074).

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Mozart Operatic Arias. *Marriage of Figaro*—Non so più cosa son (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and *Marriage of Figaro*—Giunse alfin il momento (recit.) and *Deh vieni, non tardar* (aria) (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). One side, and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*—Tortures Unabating (Act II). (Sung in English). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1157. \$3.15.

Eleanor Steber is an expert Mozart singer. Her musicianship, admirably placed voice, plus a technical equipment which is well above the general standard of the present day, account for this.

At the Metropolitan she has appeared with distinction in productions of "Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni," "The Magic Flute" and the "Abduction from the Seraglio," singing some of the most demanding roles in the soprano repertoire.

It is therefore a pleasure to greet this attractive album of Mozart arias by this admired singer. Outstanding in interest is the great aria, *Tortures Unabating!* from the "Abduction from the Seraglio." This will, in years to come, be of some historical importance because Miss Steber was entrusted with the great role of Constanze in the production of the Metropolitan's first "Seraglio"—an event, which as toudingly enough, took place on November 29, 1946—164 years after its original production. *Tortures Unabating!* is one of the most demanding of arias. Its breadth, its scintillating *roulades*, its frequent excursions to the high D are things to make a singer tremble. A heroic coloratura is what Mozart has here asked for. Miss Steber, while probably not measuring up to what Lilli Lehmann and other great vocal mistresses of the past could do with this test-piece, nevertheless sings it in a manner and with a

security that no other current American soprano could even approach. Her scales are rapid and accurate, her trill the best that exists in America today, her musicianship ever impressive. A lack of ultimate tragic breadth is probably the singer's only handicap.

Miss Steber also contributes the most exquisite *Deh, vieni non tardar* on records, and Cherubino's *Non so piu cosa son cosa faccio*, which is slightly less interesting. With Miss Steber always cast as the Countess in "Nozze," it is interesting to hear what her Cherubino and Susanna would be like. It is probable that we shall only know through these records.

Recording is satisfactory and Jean Paul Morel's orchestra entirely adequate.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Am stillen Herd (Act I, Scene 3). One side, and **Wagner: Die Meistersinger**—Preislied (Act III, Scene 5). (Sung in German). Set Svanholm (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9791). \$1.05.

Donizetti: La Favorita—Fia dunque vero (recit.) and O mio Fernando (aria) (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9793). \$1.05.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Voce di donna o d'angelo (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Wagner: Das Rheingold**—Weiche, Wotan, Weiche! (Scene 4). (Sung in German). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9795). \$1.05.

Massenet: Thaïs—Mort de Thaïs (Act III). (Sung in French). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. One side, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut**—In quelle trine morbide (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-11-9792). \$1.05.

A batch of single operatic records is always traditionally released at this time of year—a Yuletide gesture, one supposes. In this latest group we find the RCA Victor debut of the sensational, new Wagnerian tenor, Set Svanholm. Mr. Svanholm is one of those persons who has to be seen as well as heard, for in these two excerpts from "Die Meistersinger," he merely sounds like a dozen other Wagnerian tenors one could think of. The voice is fresh, resonant, and manly, but there is nothing particularly distinctive about the tone or style. The *Preislied*, an exhausting piece to sing, is managed easily by the new tenor.

Dorothy Kirsten is presented in two arias that were not in our current catalogs: *In quelle trine morbide* from Puccini's "Manon" and the *Mort de Thais* from Massenet's now rarely performed opera. Miss Kirsten does not efface memories of others in the Puccini excerpt, which she sings with ease and efficiency. Her singing of the "Thais" number (twice before recorded—by Farrar and by Mary Lewis) is her best record to date, and quite lovely to listen to. The soprano ascends to the high D without any trouble, and her tone has the proper luminous quality. Robert Merrill punctuates this music (which is the famous *Meditation*) with Athanael's heart-broken exhortations, as Thais dies. His dark voice is admirably suited to these effective moments.

Two mezzo-sopranos are also present. Nan Merriman comes forth with her first operatic recording, and it is a well projected *O mio Fernando* from Donizetti's "La Favorita." Miss Merriman has a vibrant tone (it may be a little over-vibrant for some), and her climaxes are quite telling.

Blanche Thebom offers her most mature recording, to date. Her *Voce di donna* from "La Gioconda" is beautifully and artistically sung, while her voicing of *Erda's Warning* has depth and real authority.

Frieder Weissmann is conductor for the Misses Thebom and Merriman, as well as for Mr. Svanholm; while Jean Paul Morel officiates for Miss Kirsten.

The recordings and surfaces are quite up to RCA Victor's best.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani—*Mercè, dilette amiche* (Bolero) (Act V). One side, and **Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz**—*Non mi resta* (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Rina Gigli (soprano) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Hugo Rignold. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6459). \$2.63.

If there is any question about the musical stature of the great Gigli's daughter, Rina, this magnificent disc should quickly dispel it. Miss Gigli has chosen for this record two difficult arias from operas that are seldom heard on this side of the Atlantic—arias that show off her voice to full advantage. Collectors of operatic recordings will find this disc of especial interest.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—*Il mio tesoro* (Act II). One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—*Dalla duce pace* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Aksel Schiøtz (tenor) with the Royal Orchestra conducted by Egisto Tango. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5264). \$2.63

The distinguished tenor, Aksel Schiøtz's records are becoming more and more popular in America as shipments of them are being received from abroad. His many admirers will certainly be pleased to know

that the present disc containing two superb renditions of arias from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* are presently available.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 140—*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*. (Sung in German). Susanne Friel (soprano), R. Russell (tenor), Paul Matthen (bass), RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1162. \$4.20.

Sleepers, Wake! or Awake! A Voice Calls Us, is one of the loveliest and most popular of the Bach Church Cantatas. Two of its sections are well known to a majority of music lovers. The *Wachet auf* organ choral-prelude is taken directly from the fourth movement of this cantata, which is here sung by the tenors with orchestral accompaniment. It is a most gratifying part of this cantata. Also very familiar to most persons is the final movement which the full chorus sings: *Let all creatures now adore Thee* (also known as: *Now let every tongue adore Thee*).

The Cantata, *Wachet auf*, was intended for the Church Service of the Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Trinity, a day which rarely occurs in the Church Calendar. The gospel reading for this Sunday is the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins. The hymn of Philipp Nicolai is based on this parable, for two verses, while the third verse is derived from Chapter XXI of Revelations. Bach used the three verses of this hymn for the choral movements of *Wachet auf*, and between the verses occurs a recitative and a duet to words believed to have been written by Picander, librettist for the St. Matthew Passion. Thus the pattern of the cantata becomes symmetrical and pleasing.

This joyous wedding cantata, depicting the wedding of the faithful Soul to Christ, the Bridegroom, is sung by a small group, the Collegiate Chorale, directed by Robert Shaw. The complex opening movement is fully realized by them, but not by the recording engineers, who did not delineate the various parts too carefully on wax. The tenor recitative which follows, with violin obbligato, is annoyingly announced by one R. Russell, and provided the low spot of this album for us; fortunately his portion is the briefest section. Then follows the first soprano and baritone duet, well sung. The fourth movement is described above, which is followed by a baritone recitative, excellently sung by Paul Matthen. The sixth movement is another soprano and baritone duet, again well sung, the soprano spinning some lovely phrases in this exalted music; the oboe obbligato beautifully done by Robert Bloom. The final movement, referred to above, is done with more simplicity than solidity, but in keeping with the work

as a whole.

The reproduction did not strike us as an exceptional job for it tends to be fuzzy; also the hall used is lifeless. But Shaw and his forces provide an interesting treatment, and the music itself is incomparable. S.

Christmas Hymns and Carols. Canterbury Choir conducted by Macklin Marrow, with organ accompaniments by Ernest White. 4-10" discs in album. MGM Set No. 15. \$3.94.

We have always felt that the anniversary of the birth of Christ should be a happy occasion, and that carols sung in celebration of this festival should be sung with a joyous spirit and in a tempo indicating enthusiasm—not in the sing-song fashion of funeral dirges. So many recordings that we have heard have rather depressed us; certainly they did not fill us with the joy of Christmas. We are delighted to report that the very excellent mixed choir, that made these recordings under the direction of Macklin Marrow, sing these carols in a spirit of exultation. Some folks may think that the tempo is a trifle fast, but it suited us perfectly. The recording, which was made in a large auditorium, has that spaciousness that gives it a fine lifelike quality.

The selections in this album are: *O Come All Ye Faithful; The First Noel; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Angels from the Realms of Glory; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Joy to the World; and Silent Night.*

Treasured Christmas Hymns. Holy Name College Choir, Franciscan House of Studies, Washington, D. C. 3-10" discs in album. NCSRS Set H-1. \$4.76.

This album contains a number of Christmas selections that will be of special interest to all Catholics. They have been beautifully sung by the excellent Holy Name College Choir. The recordings have the echo of a large auditorium, which many persons feel gives them a lifelike character. The record surfaces are quite smooth and quiet.

These discs are housed in a beautiful album with a picture on the cover of the National Shrine of the League of the Perpetual Crib, which is visited by hundreds of the devout every day of the year in the Church of St. Francis of Assisi in New York City. This shrine contains stone from the original Holy Stable in Bethlehem.

The selections in this album are: *Gesu Bambino; Adeste Fideles; Lovely Infant, Dearest Saviour; Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella; O Come Little Children; See Amid the Winter Snow; Silent Night; and Nazareth.*

In view of the fact that these discs do not have lead-in grooves you may have difficulty in playing them automatically.

Scots Wha' Hae (arr. Bantock). One side, and **An Eriskay Love Lilt** (arr. Robertson). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Hugh Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-E-409). \$1.95.

This little record has been in the HMV catalog for a number of years. It was very popular with collectors of choral recordings before the war. Copies of it have not been available for a long time. We list it now because a recent shipment from England contained a few copies.

The famous Glasgow Orpheus Choir at its best!

ORGAN



Bach: Fugue a la Gigue. One side, and **Bach: Erbarm' dich mein, O Herre Gott.** Walter Baker (organ). 1-12" disc (Adelphia 0-1001). \$3.

We warmly welcome Adelphia records to the field for two reasons. They plan to issue many fine organ records, and their system of recording is unique. Their recordings, technically, may be characterized as follows:

The recorded range is 40 to 11,000 cycles per second flat, and by flat is meant no treble preëmphasis. The strident quality noted in recent releases by major companies is absent in this record, because the relationship of the upper partials and harmonics is valid. Stepping-up the higher frequencies has been considered necessary, although that need has about passed away with the advent of higher fidelity reproducers. Adelphia recordings are made with a uni-directional microphone placed to avoid as much as possible any back lash from the sides or rear of the buildings, thus the music is very clear. When played on a machine with a frequency cut off in the vicinity of 4,000 c.p.s., the balance sounds heavy. We have heard these records on a high fidelity machine and they sound marvelous. On several machines currently on the market they sounded very fine.

Mr. Baker is a virtuoso organist who has toured this continent. The *Gigue Fugue* was recorded on a Haskell organ (in the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia) and the chorale-prelude was recorded on the organ in the Wanamaker Store, Philadelphia. Both are played expertly. The record is on ruby vinylite. New Adelphia releases should be forthcoming regularly, and they have a large and ready market waiting. S.

Christmas Carols. Dick Leibert playing the organ of Radio City Music Hall, New York. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-196. \$3.57.

It is the custom in many homes to gather the family and friends together to sing carols on Christmas Eve. This album will supply fine organ accompaniments for sixteen of the best known carols—a booklet giving the words of each selection is included with this set of records. In addition, these discs will be of interest

to those persons who like nice organ recordings of their favorite carols. Dick Leibert is an excellent organist and RCA Victor has accomplished the difficult task of recording a large organ very successfully.

Among the sixteen carols recorded, will be found the following: *Joy to the World*; *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*; *Oh, Holy Night*; *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*; *The First Noel*; *Silent Night*; *O Come, All Ye Faithful*; and *Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem*.

VOCAL



Repeat Performance. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-720. \$5.85.

The combination of Lily Pons and Andre Kostelanetz is working in fine form, and so this album contains a lot of very pleasant music. Miss Pons is in excellent voice and the selections are those that she can sing most effectively. Kostelanetz supports his wife, as all good husbands should, and doesn't try any trick arrangements—he is content to remain in the background and supply appropriate accompaniments, thus, we have some fine vocal recordings that will delight Miss Pons' host of fans. The reproduction throughout is highly satisfactory.

Included in this set are two of Johann Strauss' lilt-ing waltzes—*The Blue Danube* and *Voices of Spring*. Ever-popular songs which glow with the colors of Miss Pons' voice include *Les filles de Cadiz* by Delibes, *Estrellita* by Ponce, Freire's *Ay Ay, Ay*, and *Le bonheur est une chose legere* by Saint-Saëns. She closes with the well-loved *Last Rose of Summer* which also often closes her concert program.

Songs You Love. Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1150. \$4.20.

Robert Merrill has chosen a number of selections that have proved popular with his radio audiences for this album. There is nothing particularly exciting about any of them, but as they are the sort of songs that the public in general likes, this album should, and very likely will, enjoy a wide sale.

The songs in this album are: *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*; *Yours is My Heart Alone*; *I'm Falling in Love With Someone*; *Down to de Rivah*; *Jonah and the Whale*; *Trees*; *Sylvia*; and *Alvina*.

Caccini: Amarilli. One side, and **Donaudy: O del mio amato ben.** (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6313). \$2.63.

Here is one of the loveliest records that Gigli ever made. Perfect examples of the Italian *legato* style which we are very sorry to say seems to be fast disappearing. Of particular importance is the Caccini

(1550-1618) selection—a graceful delicate song that cannot help appealing to those who are charmed by true *bel canto*. Three hundred years elapse between the sides of this disc, for we find a **Donaudy** (1879-1925) selection on the reverse. It is *O del mio amato ben*, which is not quite in a class with *Amarilli*, but Gigli's superb rendition makes it a very acceptable companion. Quiet and appropriate string accompaniments add to the charm of this outstanding disc.

High Button Shoes—Selections. Phil Silvers and Members of Original Cast. 4-10" discs in album RCA Victor Set K-10. \$4.20.

"High Button Shoes" is apparently a big hit in New York and thus there has been created a large demand for recordings from this musical comedy. The present album contains the principal numbers sung by members of the New York cast headed by the star, Phil Silvers. The music is reasonably attractive and should appeal to those who like light comedy melodies, however, we rather feel that the big sale will be made to those who have seen the show—dealers in Philadelphia, where the show opened and in New York, where it is now playing, please note.

The selections contained in this album are: *Can't You Just See Yourself in Love With Me?*; *There's Nothing Like a Model T*; *Get Away for a Day in the Country*; *Papa, Won't You Dance With Me?*; *On a Sunday by the Sea*; *You're My Girl*; *I Still Get Jealous*; and *Nobody Ever Died for Dear Old Rutgers*.

Schubert: Ave Maria. One side, and **Schubert: Aufenthalt.** (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-12" disc (V-11-9836). \$1.05.

Many critics thought that Marian Anderson's earlier record of Schubert's *Ave Maria* was an almost perfect recording—a rendition that could not be bettered. We wonder what they will say when they hear this new disc—they used up all their superlatives on the former one. To us, it seems that Miss Anderson has "improved upon perfection." Her voice sounds fuller and richer, and the serious effort she has always put forth to improve her art, is shown in a technique which few, if any, of her fellow artists have achieved.

Still Night, Holy Night (Douglas—Gruber, arr. Woodgate). One side and **Tchaikovsky: Legend—Christ in His Garden.** John McCormack (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc. (V-DA-1755.) \$1.95.

This lovely little disc, by the late beloved Irish tenor, John McCormack, will be new to many American listeners for it was never made available in the RCA Victor catalog. It contains two selections that are appropriate for the Christmas season. The words of *Silent Night* are not the ones that are familiar to us on this side of the Atlantic and, thus, add new interest to this recording. For collectors of McCormack records, this is a must.

Handel: Messiah—Every valley shall be exalted. One side, and **Handel: Messiah**—Comfort ye, my people. Heddle Nash (tenor) with the Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Maurice Miles. 1-12" disc (V-C-3454). \$2.

One of England's most distinguished of oratorio singers presents two popular arias from Handel's *Messiah*. Heddle Nash, through his recordings, has quite a following among music lovers on this side of the Atlantic. They will doubtless be pleased to know that copies of this record are available in this country.

VIOLIN



Godowsky—trans. Heifetz: **Alt Wien**. One side, and **Drigo**—trans. Heifetz: **Valse Bluette**. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-10" disc (V-10-1345). 79c.

Rachmaninoff—trans. Heifetz: **Daisies and Oriental Sketch**. One side, and **Prokofieff**—trans. Heifetz: **Gavotta and March**. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 1-10" disc (V-10-1355). 79c.

Lovely little selections will be found on these discs beautifully played by Jascha Heifetz. Reproduction—excellent.

Bartok: Violin Sonata No. 2. Five sides, and **Bartok: Four Roumanian Dances**. Tossy Spivakovsky (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AA. \$7.20.

The late Béla Bartok was unquestionably a musician's musician and thus it is quite fitting that this Concert Hall Society album is sponsored by the League of Composers. It contains a work that will be of interest primarily to musicians and to those who are daring enough to investigate the unusual—music that sounds entirely different from that to which they are used to listening. Tibor Serly in his notes that accompany this recording states:

"To realize the significance of Bartok's *Second Violin Sonata*, it is necessary to bear in mind that it was composed in 1920 when the composer had made a complete break with the past. This period is characterized by an almost total absence of traditional chords and harmonies. Everything became subordinated to melodic lines and thus a new flexibility of contrapuntal articulation is achieved. One could be deceived into believing that a Schoenbergian twelve-tone system has been adopted. Actually, closer examination reveals that Bartok adhered to a more severe basic tonal conception. True, one must become accustomed to strange forms of scales of mixed modal origin, as well as apparent polytonal combinations. The principles of key relationships, however are maintained and the melodic lines are essentially diatonic."

With this hint of what one may expect from this work, we leave it to the individual as to whether he wishes to investigate it or not. The recording has been very faithfully accomplished by Concert Hall and the discs are made of a silent unbreakable plastic.



DICTION

The Story of the Nativity. Walter Hampden (narrator) with supporting cast. 3-10" discs in album. Major Set M-2. \$3.94.

Many religious recordings have come into being during the last few years but most of them, we are sorry to report, have been mediocre as to content and some of them in very poor taste. *The Story of the Nativity* with the distinguished actor, Walter Hampden, as narrator, is a decided exception. It is the simple story of the Nativity beautifully told and dramatized in the best of taste by an able cast of players with the support of a fine choir and appropriate background music played on a suitable organ. Children of all ages, and adults too, might turn in humility to this age old story for guidance in the turmoil of this materialistic age.

The reproduction is excellent; the records are made of a non-breakable material.

Dickens: A Christmas Carol. Lionel Barrymore (Scrooge), Richard Hale (narrator), with musical background. 4-10" discs in album. MGM Set No. 16A. \$3.94.

In view of the splendid versions of this immortal Christmas story which are already available, we can see no need for this present quite mediocre one. Our preference is the RCA Victor recording with Eustace Wyatt in the role of Scrooge, for it has the real Dickensian tang and follows the text very closely. That performance is given with the proper pauses and those pauses are not punctuated with jingling tunes "dramatically" played as they are in the present M-G-M version, which has been produced, in our opinion, very much in the style of a radio soap opera. Dickens' Christmas Carol does not rate that sort of treatment.



CHILDREN

Tazewell: The Small One. Bing Crosby (speaking) with supporting cast, sound effects and music directed by Victor Young. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-553. \$2.89.

The story of "The Small One" is a most unusual Christmas tale. It was told for nine consecutive years at Christmas time on the Kate Smith show by Ethel Barrymore and then Bing Crosby did it. Many thousands of listeners have been touched by this simple

fable with its hero "an undersized, matty-tailed, scrawny but lovable" donkey.

Decca has given this story a marvelous production on these records, and the child, who finds this album in his Christmas stocking, will have something that he can enjoy himself, and something that his little playmates will want to hear over and over again. We are very sure that most children will never tire of the touching little story of "The Small One."

Why the Chimes Rang. Ted Malone (speaking) with Dick Leibert playing the organ of Radio City Music Hall, New York. 2-10" discs in folder. RCA Victor Set Y-357. \$2.37.

A charming and appealing little Christmas story is reverently told by Ted Malone with supporting cast on this pair of nonbreakable discs. Dick Leibert supplies a fine musical background at the organ of Radio City Music Hall. If you select this recording as a gift for your children, you might suggest to them that it would be an excellent idea for them to take the records to their Sunday School so that their friends there might also enjoy them. This lovely little story of love and charity will appeal to children of all ages.

MISCELLANEOUS



Angels from the Realms of Glory and Calm on the Listening Ear of Night. One side, and **O Holy Night and Hark the Herald Angels Sing.** Robert B. Kleinschmidt playing the carillon of First Methodist Church, Germantown, Pa. 1-12" disc. (Riggs & Jeffreys XM7A).

Joy to the World and O Come, O Come, Emanuel. One side, and **O Come All Ye Faithful and O Little Town of Bethlehem.** Robert B. Kleinschmidt playing the carillon of First Methodist Church, Germantown, Pa. 1-12" disc (Riggs & Jeffreys XM7B). Sold only in sets (XM7A and XM7B). \$7.

Of all the recordings of cast bell carillons that we have heard these are by far the most lifelike. We doubt very much if anyone could tell these recordings from the actual bells when they are played on a good tower amplifier. Professor Kleinschmidt is one of the outstanding carillonneurs in America and has been accorded the privilege of playing more than two-thirds of all the carillons in this country. He rates the highest praise for the skill he demonstrates on these discs, and Riggs & Jeffreys are to be congratulated for the realistic recordings they have achieved. It is no mean task to capture on wax the tones of these great bells located in a tower many feet above the street.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Dmitri Shostakovich: The Man and His Work. By Ivan Martynov. Translated from the Russian by T. Guralsky. 197 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.75.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Columbia Book of Musical Masterworks. Edited by Goddard Lieberson. Introduction by Edward Wallerstein. xiii+546 pp. Allen, Towne & Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—A&H, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletons, BO—Bost., C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CFS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, HW—Hargall, MU—Musterkraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U.S.A.

VOL. 15. NO. 11

JANUARY 1948

By mail to any address
50c. per year

The New Catalogue of Historical Records
1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer.
494 pp. Published in England. For sale
in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Phil-
adelphia). Price \$9.75.

In this place, in our issue of June 1937, we announced the publication of Robert Bauer's *Historical Records*. The few copies that were assigned to the U. S. A. were quickly sold and the issue became almost immediately out-of-print. Through the years fabulous amounts were offered for copies. It is reported that copies in good condition brought as high as twenty-five dollars. A second revised and enlarged edition has just been published in England and fifty copies have been dispatched to the publishers of this bulletin. In England this book sells for forty-five shillings; the price in U. S. A. is \$9.75. The first edition contained 294 pages; the present edition contains 494. In revising his work, Mr. Bauer has dropped a few artists whom he felt were not of sufficient importance to warrant inclusion, and has added many, about whom data was found since the first edition was compiled. Much valuable information has been added to the present volume. The dates of birth and death of the artists are noted, together with the dates of their debuts and the place of debut; if the artist created the role in the world première of the opera, that fact is noted by a key.

For those who are not familiar with Mr. Bauer's many years of research, we will mention that his present volume contains "record-listings of all internationally famous opera and concert singers known to have made lateral cut discs during the years, roughly, from 1898 to 1908-09, as well as record-listings of other important vocalists whose reputation never travelled, for one reason or another, beyond the confines of their own countries." The name

of the manufacturer who made the recording and the date it was made, together with the style and color of the original label, are always indicated.

In view of the fact that the interest in collecting records of historic value has grown considerably in recent years, it would seem that this book should find a ready, although comparatively small, market awaiting it in this country. It is practically a "must" for anyone indulging in this fascinating hobby.

* * *

RCA Victor's new complete catalog for 1948 is now ready for distribution. It is a large one (8½" x 11") and contains 550 pages. It is just about the size of a metropolitan telephone directory. This huge volume is divided into two sections. The first section is alphabetically arranged by title, composer and artist. The second section contains the recordings made by Red Seal artists and is alphabetically arranged by artists, with a short biographical sketch of each of the more important ones. In view of the fact that we have not had a complete RCA Victor catalog for several years, this is news of real importance to all record collectors. The price is 25¢. In ordering a copy from your dealer by mail, you should add 10¢ to partly cover the postage, as the dealer handles this item without profit.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C sharp minor. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-718. \$10.85.

The recorded Mahler symphonies now number five of the nine great symphonic creations which he left us. Recordings have definitely done much to further the interest in Mahler's works, which unfortunately do not receive too frequent concert performances. Columbia's catalog now lists a number of Mahler's most important compositions; and it is an interesting sidelight to note that the three symphonies which they have recorded were made at recording sessions, and not merely recorded concert performances, which previous Mahler symphonic recordings had been. These recorded concert performances led Kolodin to remark that the manufacturers (of records) would accept performances of Mahler when they are thrust upon them but will rarely sponsor them.

We are indeed fortunate to have Bruno Walter conducting this work, for no other conductor is better qualified to provide an authoritative interpretation. Walter directs the *Fifth* with obvious devotion, achieving broad planes of tone, great depth of emotional content, soaring climaxes, and above all, a tremendously unified reading that clearly outlines the immense architecture of this symphonic giant. He even gets the New York Philharmonic to play with some measure of the luscious tonal quality of his old Vienna Philharmonic—a tribute indeed. The reading is also faithful to small details which can so easily be lost in a work of this magnitude. It is, naturally, another landmark in the recorded repertoire.

We could write several columns concerning the circumstances attending the composition of this symphony, for they are mighty interesting. However, summarily, the *Fifth* is considered typical of the second period of Mahler's life, when the change in the composer's mental outlook, which had taken place since the earlier works, can here be seen in its full effect. It is divided in three large sections comprising five movements and is without program. The famous *Adagietto*, which begins the third section, had previously been recorded several times. Now, a vast multitude may hear the entire work, and we imagine a great many will take it to heart, particularly in this convincing performance.

S.

Respighi: Feste Romane. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-707. \$4.60.

With the first domestic recording of *Roman Festivals*, the famous trilogy of tone-poems, which

Respighi wrote depicting certain aspects of Rome, are now available in good modern recordings. The *Pines of Rome* and *The Fountains of Rome* are somewhat better known to most persons than *Roman Festivals*. These three Roman suites stand out as some of the most pictorial and vividly descriptive music ever penned. In fact, any lack of genuine substance or fine material is usually overlooked because of the excellence of their mood, and the uncanny way in which Respighi has orchestrated and colored these minor masterpieces.

Roman Festivals, written in 1929, is composed of four tonal pictures: Circus Maximus, The Jubilee, The October Harvest Festivals, and The Epiphany. In the first panel, Respighi recreates one of the brutal spectacles at the arena in the late Roman days when authorities were trying to stamp out Christianity—the howling of wild beasts, the agitated crowd, song of the martyrs, and the great tumult are all in the music. The other three are equally vivid pictures. Respighi has not failed to provide adequate contrasts with many lovely softer passages, so that the stunning climaxes stand out in bold relief. *Roman Festivals* is colorful and descriptive and also interesting and exciting.

Ormandy and the Philadelphians play this brilliant music in a brilliant fashion, and are recorded faithfully. Anyone interested in the trilogy will do well to start his collection with this set, as the program of the music is more concrete than either the *Fountains* or the *Pines*, making this set easier to appreciate. The only previous recording ever made was an old Polydor by the Berlin Philharmonic under Victor de Sabata.

S.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-36. \$9.45.

Handel—arr. Harty: The Water Music Suite. The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-38. \$5.25.

A pair of worthy recordings of symphonic staples to help round out the English Decca catalog are now available. The *Franck Symphony* has already been chosen, by a majority of those who have heard it, as the finest phonographic version available. We can easily endorse this opinion for it is a sane interpretation, and at the same time it is an inspired performance and a thoroughly convincing one. It is entirely free from the interpretative excesses common to most performances of this work. While it fits on eight record sides, the tempi never seemed hurried to us; in fact, they always seemed exactly right. Again, Münch's remarkable control of dynamics and sense of balance is demonstrated throughout the set. The Paris Conservatory Orchestra, recorded at

Walthamstow, sounds magnificent and is reproduced with great warmth. Monteux gave us a fine recording in December 1941 (Vic. DM-840), and the same month Columbia issued the Beecham Set (MM-479). Both of these sets are uncommonly excellent. All other versions, including the recent Ormandy set (Col. MM-608) are inferior to Münch, Monteux, and Beecham (listed in the order of our preference).

Since the Hamilton Harty recording of the *Water Music*, fortunately still in the catalog (Col. MX-13), no one has issued a set which quite approaches his buoyant reading. After careful consideration, we believe Basil Cameron comes closest to him, and with the excellent *ffrr* reproduction in his favor, Cameron's set is the most worthy successor. Cameron's reading is valid throughout and we enjoyed it tremendously. He was wise in placing the *Bourée* (third movement) after the opening *Allegro* on the first record side, thus permitting the lovely *Air* (second movement) to proceed without a break on the second record side. We greatly appreciated, too, the fact that he did not tamper with the Harty score, for all those like Stokowski and Ormandy who have re-orchestrated it, have served only to prove the superiority of Harty's version.

S.

Mozart: Serenade "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" (K-525).

London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1163. \$3.15.

(This annotation is reprinted from the November, 1946, issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

In the past decade or two there has been an abundance of recordings of the popular and lovable *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. We have yet to hear the set by Karl Böhm and the Saxon State Orchestra; but for many years our favorite recording has been the old Polydor set by Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, although Bruno Walter gave us two interesting examples and Weingartner one also. For grace, style, elegance, and all-around Mozartian flavor, the Furtwängler job was always intriguing.

The present Beecham set is recorded much more robustly than the older Polydor set, and while it may not be entirely in keeping with the character of the music, Beecham's strings are reproduced vividly. As we consider Furtwängler and Beecham two of the world's outstanding living conductors, we will offer a brief blow-by-blow description of their interpretations.

In the first movement, neither conductor observes the repeats, both have the same tempo, and Furtwängler is a shade more delicate in the softer passages with lighter phrasing. The second movement finds Furtwängler observing more repeats than Beecham and approaching the *Romanze* with a little lighter touch. On the return to the principal theme (bar 52),

Beecham uses a solo first and a solo second violin to the end except for the final eight bars. Furtwängler continues in this portion with the regular string section. Beecham makes another slight change in the third movement at the close, observing an unmarked ritard and closing with a final chord; both observe all repeats in the traditional manner.

It is in the final movement that Beecham makes a radical change that causes everyone to sit up and take notice. He halves the tempo. Furtwängler takes this movement at the customary pace, with half notes at about 132—Beecham takes the *quarters* at 132. The effect is indeed startling, especially in this day and age of accelerated tempi. We admit it is a clever idea, for the inner voices stand out boldly, and the movement, being short anyhow, does not drag in the least. We can only uphold Furtwängler and the traditional pace by saying that our copy of the score (Baron) has the time indicated as simple binary time, commonly called split time, indicating *two* beats to the measure, and that is the way his conducting can be felt. In Beecham's version, *four* beats to the measure are distinctly felt.

When all is said and done, Beecham's new recording should be heard, for it is a stimulating experience. Many persons will add this to their collections which already contain one of the Walter or Weingartner sets.

S.

Hanson: Symphony No. 3 in A minor. Nine sides, and **Sibelius: Swanwhite, Op. 54**—Maiden with the Roses. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1170. \$6.30.

No history of music in America will ever be written in which the name of Howard Hanson does not figure prominently. He has been an untiring champion of American music, and his festivals in Rochester have given much encouragement to native composers. Hanson is a prolific composer, as well as being director of the Eastman School of Music and conductor of the local orchestra. The *Third Symphony* was commissioned by the Columbia Broadcasting System and was about two years in composition, being completed in 1938. It is dedicated to Serge Koussevitzky.

While the *Third Symphony* has no program, the composer suggests that it pays tribute to the epic qualities of the northern pioneers who founded the first Swedish settlement on the Delaware, and in later centuries constituted such a mighty force in the conquering of the West. It is music of a strictly romantic character, and orchestrated very heavily. For those who love masses of lush orchestral tone, this set is tailor-made. Every commentator remarks about Hanson's indebtedness to Sibelius, or some such similar remark concerning the similarities. It is true that one is reminded of Sibelius at times, but more so because of the Scandinavian or Nordic subject matter than because of his handling of it. Sibelius

has a more refined and economical way of working his material; Hanson pastes things together after the fashion of Richard Strauss.

The performance has the loving care of Koussevitzky, who is eminently in his element in this massive fabric of rich textures and colors. The reproduction reveals the music in all its glory; surfaces on our set are excellent. The final side, *Maiden with the Roses*, originally appeared in the catalog as V-14355 (in DM-347).

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B flat, Op. 60. The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-705. \$5.85.

With this album, George Szell makes his American record debut as conductor; all of his previous recordings were made in Europe, except the recently released Mozart *Quartet No. 2 for Piano and Strings*, in which he played the piano part.

At the age of seventeen, Szell decided to become a conductor rather than follow the career of pianist. A large part of the world's music lovers are thankful for the decision, for he has provided many memorable performances, and is today one of the great conductors. He was appointed permanent conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra in 1946. Before that he had guest-conducted nearly every major orchestra in this country, and we can recall some fine concerts he has directed in Philadelphia. His performances at the Metropolitan were received enthusiastically.

After several years as assistant conductor under Richard Strauss at the Royal Opera in Berlin, and then as principal conductor at the Strasbourg Municipal Theatre, he held leading posts in Darmstadt, Dusseldorf, and Berlin. He has had a brilliant past, and as a man of fifty years, must surely have an even more brilliant future ahead of him.

The biographical build-up which preceded is borne out by the excellent account he gives of the Beethoven *Fourth Symphony*. With Szell, musicianship is first, and only after he has laid a proper framework does he impose his conception of the music. We have here a crisp and lively performance, clean orchestral playing, and fine reproduction. This is indeed a good set, and an auspicious debut. It easily supersedes Columbia's older set by Weingartner, and gives Toscanini as well as the recent Beecham set a healthy run for their money.

S.

Roussel: Petite Suite, Op. 39. Three sides, and Fauré: *Pavane in F sharp minor, Op. 50.* Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-37. \$5.25.

From the *hors d'oeuvres* of music comes this first recording of Roussel's *Petite Suite* to inject a note of

freshness in the new crop of record releases. Roussel is at present represented by only a couple of recordings in the domestic catalogs, principally his fine *Quartet in D, Op. 45* in a superlative recording by the Roths (Col. MM-339). His interesting "The Spider's Feast" was unfortunately cut from the Columbia catalog. Several of his songs and other works, including the *Symphony No. 3* were accorded European recordings a number of years ago. Thus, we welcome Decca's enterprise in issuing a new Roussel work, and doubly welcome such a beautiful performance by Münch, who is turning out to be a most dependable conductor.

Albert Roussel (1869-1937) was a very distinctive modern French composer, quite prolific, and was a master craftsman. Color and refinement abound in all his music; but he was, unfortunately, not too highly inspired, and because of this he just missed being a truly great composer. It is in a way tragic that such a fine, fastidious musician must, by a narrow margin, be excluded from the ranks of the masters as time rolls on.

The *Petite Suite* is comprised of three movements: *Aubade, Pastorale, and Masquerade*. It is a thoroughly charming work which we enjoyed playing several times for its subtlety of color and aimable picture-painting. Münch's deft hand and Decca's frrr reproduction provide a revealing performance. Fauré's sweet *Pavane* is a perfect filler for this album. The *Pavane* was recorded years ago by Walter Damrosch for Victor, but has been cut-out for a long time.

S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner").

Five sides, and Gluck: *Orfeo and Euridice—Dance of the Spirits (Act II).* NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1172. \$4.20.

If this album attains a large volume of sales and achieves a wide popularity over a period of time, it is safe to say that the majority of record buyers cannot judge a great performance when they hear one. For this set is a prime example of how utterly dry, uninteresting, and absolutely unmusical a performance can be, and at the same time be played with unflinching precision and technical perfection. We are embarrassed to admit it, but we are reminded of the old player pianos, where the rolls struck out music that was mechanically perfect, but without any warmth or feeling. So it is with this unfortunate rendition of the lovely *Haffner Symphony*—it is a study in granite—cold and calculating.

We have heard Ormandy, a few years back, perform this symphony at the subscription concerts in Philadelphia with equal precision, but with added resiliency. And the Beecham recording (Col. MM-399) is the last word in a subtle performance, which falls so easily on the ear and pleases one with each

hearing. Even Toscanini's early set of the *Haffner* (Vic. DM-65) has a shade more sparkle to it than his present set, although neither are comparable to Beecham. The unresonant reproduction in the present set does not help matters any. This must have been made in Studio 8-H, for it does not seem to have the ring that Carnegie Hall recordings have. Aside from it being unresonant, the reproduction is bright and clear—if only it had some perspective too. Sorry, but we like Mozart that is gay, witty, buoyant, and sparkling, and above all, warm and resilient. Beecham, Walter, and others have a more knowing hand.

S.

Ibert: Escales (Ports of Call). San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1173. \$3.15. Also available on vinylite records: DV-10. \$5.25.

Escales is a colorful piece of music depicting three ports of call where a ship puts in briefly for refueling and taking on food. Ibert never named which ports he had in mind, merely writing three contrasting movements. But a review of the first performance (Paris, 1924) assigned the names of the ports, and since Ibert never denied the programmatic outline, we know these movements today as Palermo, Tunis-Nefta, and Valencia (the first is often entitled Rome-Palermo). The titles admirably fit the music and vice versa, and the idea of a Mediterranean tour suits the work as a whole. The music is gentle and easy to listen to, and while it is of the school of Ravel, with shades of Debussy, Ibert is a highly competent and skilled craftsman, whose originality is wholly sincere. There is genuine substance to his writings, and a beautiful technical finish.

Columbia issued a modern recording of this work a couple of years ago by the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York under the direction of Rodzinski, which took the place of a much earlier version in its catalog thereof, Orchestre des Concerts Straram. Our choice is not an easy one to make. Rodzinski and Monteux, and it more brilliant performance but Monteux has the French subtlety that this piece requires. Our hint is toward Monteux, but both to require. Our available for your selection at your dealer's should be

Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1166. \$3.15.

Last spring Asch issued a recording of this spirited Khachaturian suite by the Santa Monica Civic Symphony directed by Jacques Rachmilovich, and despite the rather poor surfaces of the discs, it enjoys an immense sale. Victor came along with the present version, which was issued as a special release just prior to Christmas, and it became one of the biggest

selling holiday items. The Boston "Pops" are right at home with such music, and give a performance that is absolutely thrilling. If you are looking for some new orchestral music that is both brilliant and satisfying, here is a recording that you should not overlook.

Masquerade Suite is in five sections: Valse, Nocturne, Mazurka, Romance, Galop. It was composed in 1939, but did not receive its first performance until 1944.

Weber: Oberon—Overture. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-9951). \$1.05.

Suppé: Light Cavalry—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9954). \$1.05.

Berlioz: Le Corsaire—Overture, Op. 21. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-11-9955). \$1.05.

Since the advent of the phonograph, there has always been a demand for good recordings of popular overtures. Down through the years, such discs as the three listed above have enjoyed substantial and continued sales. Although there have been previous recordings of all of these selections, the high quality of the present versions make them desirable additions to the repertory. If you are interested in such records, you will not be disappointed in any of the above discs.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-714. \$4.60.

Why another recording of the *Nutcracker Suite* we wouldn't know. It has been recorded by numerous symphony orchestras of top rank. Columbia has in its own catalog recorded versions by the Chicago Symphony under Stock and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York directed by Rodzinski. Probably Kostelanetz wanted to record it and Columbia couldn't say no. He gives a very pleasant reading that might almost be called "dainty." Some folks may prefer it, but he is up against mighty stiff competition.

Moussorgsky—arr. Rimsky-Korsakov: Khovantschina—Dances of the Persian Slaves (Act IV). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6450). \$2.63.

There have been several previous recordings of this exotic music but none of them compare with this splendid modern one under the distinguished direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. We admit that this is not profound nor important music, and we are not at all sure how much of it is Moussorgsky's nor how much of it is Rimsky-Korsakov's, but we do know that it is spirited, and to us, quite fascinating. Sir Thomas has given this recording his usual

careful preparation and the results that he has obtained are superior.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Overture. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12665D). \$1.25.

This recording will find it hard going in competition with the English Decca version by the London Philharmonic under Leinsdorf, which was made available a few months ago. Of course, it is only about one-half the price, but the cost is not the prime factor with most collectors.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Alan Hovhaness Orchestral Compositions. "Lousadzak" Piano Concerto. Four sides. Maro Ajemian (piano) with orchestra conducted by Alan Hovhaness. "Tzaikerk." Anahid Ajemian (violin) and Phillip Kaplan (flute) with orchestra conducted by Alan Hovhaness. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 876. \$5.62.

Among the more "advanced" American composers, Alan Hovhaness is coming into more and greater prominence. He has repeatedly received the nod from such able critics as Olin Downes and Virgil Thomson. Therefore, those who are interested in "advanced" music (the present name for ultramodern) will doubtless be thrilled to know that the above two works for solo instruments and orchestra are available in recorded form. A few months ago a couple of Mr. Hovhaness' pieces for piano were released (Disc Set No. 875).

We can think of no better way to give our readers some idea of this music than to quote from the notes that accompany this album:

"*Lousadzak* is perhaps the most unusual piano concerto ever written. It is cast in the form of a single, continuously spiralling movement. As with most of Hovhaness' music, it is non-harmonic, exotically melodic, and rhythmically complex. Throughout, the sounds of oriental instruments are clearly evoked in the pluckings of the strings and the percussive, dancing melodies of the piano . . .

Tzaikerk, constructed as a sprightly dance fading into a mystically hushed closing (in defiance of accepted formulae for climatic writing) is a sober, urgent between the lively, dancing flute and the sober, urgent violin which ultimately subdues its rival . . ."

The solo artists for these recordings were carefully selected by the composer and as he directs the performances, there is little doubt but that they are authoritative. It would seem that Mr. Hovhaness is presenting his music on these discs for the consideration of that vast army of music lovers who rely upon recordings for much of their musical edification and enjoyment.

Disc has recorded these works very well and the record surfaces are pleasingly quiet.

Couperin: Concert Royal No. 4. A Merkel (violin), R. Cortet (flute), F. Oubradous (bassoon), M. Frécheville (violoncello), Morel (Oboe), R. Gerlin (harpichord), conducted by R. Désormière. 2-12" discs. (OL51 and OL52). \$4.20. (Two-pocket album available with these records at 65¢ additional).

L'Oiseau-Lyre has specialized in the recording of the works of the great French composer François Couperin (1668-1733), and its catalog contains numerous items of importance to students of the music of the 17th and 18th centuries. We have selected the above recording from the list as a fair example of L'Oiseau-Lyre's work in this field.

Dated as it is, this work holds much charm, and it would seem to us that regardless of one's particular taste, it is almost impossible for a true music lover not to find much to admire and enjoy in this lovely music. Couperin was a contemporary of Bach, and those, who are intrigued by the works of the great Johann Sebastian, will doubtless find much to interest them in his many and varied compositions.

L'Oiseau-Lyre has selected a group of outstanding musicians to make this recording, and the results obtained indicate that it was surely a work of love. The fine balance, which these artists have achieved, is ensemble playing at its best. The reproduction is highly satisfactory. Here is an item that the discerning music lover should not pass by without investigation.

Franck: Sonata in A major for Violin and Piano. Zino Francescatti (violin) and Robert Casadesus (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia set MM-717. \$5.85.

We cannot imagine a finer performance of this important work of César Franck than the present one. We write this with the full knowledge that Heifetz and Rubinstein, and Thibaud and Casadesus made recordings of it a number of years ago. It would seem to us that these two artistic temperaments have achieved a blend that makes for a performance in the present for the highest praise. Franck conceived this work as a piece of chamber music in which both instruments are of equal importance and a proper rendition of it calls for a well-balanced blending of the instruments. Each artist must forget himself and work for a smooth rendition of the composition as a whole. This the present artists have done with very satisfactory results.

Although Franck was a prolific composer, his celebrity rests on a very few works, among which is always mentioned his *Sonata in A major for violin and piano*. For that reason, such a splendid recording as Columbia issues this month is an important

addition to the repertory of recorded music.

R.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B flat Major, Op. 19. Artur Schnabel (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 4-12" discs in album (V-DB-9099 to V-DB-9102—automatic sequence). \$10.50.

It is reported that Schnabel is going to re-record all of the Beethoven piano concertos. Last September, his new recording of the *Fourth* reached America and was reviewed in these columns. We gave it quite a glowing review and seemingly we judged it correctly for the response from music lovers all over the country was almost unanimous—it was considered one of the outstanding recordings of the year just passed. Now we must give our attention to the *Second*, which has just arrived from England.

Recently, Victor issued a recording of this work by William Kapell and the NBC Symphony conducted by Golschmann. In considering it, we said:

"We rather imagine that Kapell gives a more poetic rendition with a lighter touch than Schnabel. One English reviewer says that, 'Schnabel goes ahead and gives us the plain facts.' We think that most of our readers will know what he means, therefore, if you would prefer the more orthodox Schnabel reading, you had better wait for the English recording. If you would like one a little more spirited and just a bit more gay, then the one that is presently available will be more to your taste."

We have just played both the Kapell and Schnabel versions and we do not wish to change that which we wrote in the earlier review of the Kapell set. In fact, our readers to make their own choice have a fine recording which one they choose.

R.

OPERA



Thomas: Mignon—Légères hirondelles (Swallow duet) (Act I). (Sung in French). One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Bella così, madonna** (scene and duet) (Sung in Italian). Risè Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Ezio Pinza (Basso) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (C-72371D). \$1.25.

Duets, trios, quartets, quintets and sextets were not so rare in the good old days of operatic recording, and so we welcome Rise Stevens and Ezio Pinza—an attractive combination—in these two excerpts from *Mignon* and *Gioconda*.

Both Mr. Pinza and Miss Stevens have made successes at the Metropolitan in these operas, particu-

larly in Ambroise Thomas' pretty music.

Here we find both singers in good voice, especially so in the *Légères hirondelles*, which for years was represented with distinction in the catalogs by Farrar and Journet.

The *Gioconda* excerpt is the bulk of the scene between Laura, the haughty Venetian beauty, and her vengeful husband, Alvise. There are far more inspired pages in Ponchielli's melodramatic score than these.

Recording seems quite up to present-day standards, but the surface on the copy, at hand for reviewing purposes, was decidedly rough.

D.

Leoncavallo: Pagliacci—Ballatella (Act I). One side, and **Boito: Mefistofele—L'Altra notte in fondo al mare** (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9848). \$1.05.

Verdi: Aida—Ritorna vincitor (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Il Trovatore—Vanne, lasciami** (recit.) and **D'amor sull' ali rosee** (aria) (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Zinka Milanov (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9839). \$1.05.

Gounod: Faust—Ballade: Il était un roi de Thulé. One side, and **Gounod: Faust—Air des bijoux** (Act III). (Sung in French). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-11-9838). \$1.05.

Two sopranos who have made brilliant careers at the Metropolitan are presented by RCA Victor this month. Let us take them alphabetically.

Licia Albanese sings the *Ballatella* from *Pagliacci*. An up-to-date recording of this charming aria was sorely needed, and so it is too bad that this proves to be Mme. Albanese's least effective record to date. The singing is heavy and labored and the rhythmic pulse is lacking in lilt and buoyancy. When you compare this disc to Lucrezia Bori's unsurpassed *Ballatella*, made during the acoustical era, you realize how far short the present performance falls. Much better, if you except some sloppily sung scale passages, is Mme. Albanese's account of the aria, *L'altra notte in fondo al mare* from Boito's *Mefistofele*. Here the tones are well focused and filled with dramatic intensity, and the pathetic plight of the demented Margherita is most artistically realized.

The very difficult aria *D'amor sull' ali rosee* from Verdi's *Trovatore* is exquisitely sung by Zinka Milanov. Here is this sometimes unpredictable soprano at her best. Mme. Milanov's best spells real vocal glamor. The tones float out with velvety softness and the high pianissimos are enchantingly

beautiful. A modern record of this fine Verdi aria was much needed. The Yugoslav soprano also handles Aida's *Ritorna Vincitor!* with thrilling vibrance, though the control of her voice could be steadier during the final phrases of the aria.

Finally we come to Eleanor Steber, who sings the entire *scena* of the *Roi de Thule* and the *Jewel Song* from *Faust*. This is a fine performance. It is nice to hear the trills so well taken, in an age which is practically trillless, and Mme. Steber's French is to be highly commended. The singer takes the final trill and high climactic B in one breath. The result is that the high note sounds a trifle strained and the singer seems out of breath on the last note of the aria. Otherwise, this is a splendid record.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Tosca—*E lucevan le stelle*. One side, and **Puccini: La Tosca**—*Recondita armonia*. (Sung in Italian). James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-10" disc (V-10-1357). 79¢.

This month James Melton adds to his growing list of recorded arias, Cavaradossi's two principal moments from *Tosca*. One shrinks from speculating on how many times *E lucevan le stelle* has been placed on records by an unending line of celebrated tenors.

Mr. Melton sings pleasantly and with a certain romantic flavor. He cannot spin a tone in the manner of *Enrico* Tagliavini, nor can he catapult a high tone with the confidence of Enrico Caruso or Beniamino Gigli, but his singing is nevertheless attractive.

The fine orchestral backgrounds have probably been better recorded here than at any previous time. Surfaces are good and the whole effect agreeable.
D.

CHORAL



Couillard—arr. de Smijers: *Viri Galilaei*. The Strasbourg Cathedral Choir conducted by Abbé Hoch. 1-10" disc (OL-21). \$1.60.

L'Heritier—arr. Smijers: *Beata es, Virgo Maria*. The Strasbourg Cathedral Choir conducted by Abbé Hoch. 1-10" disc (OL-23). \$1.60.

From the L'Oiseau-Lyre catalog, which we mentioned editorially last month, we have selected these two choral discs recorded by the famous Strasbourg Cathedral Choir under the direction of Abbé Hoch. The selections are by two 16th century writers of religious music both of whom will probably be unknown to most of our readers. Little information is available concerning Couillard; Jean L'Heritier was a

French composer who lived in the early part of the 16th century and was a student of Josquin des Prés.

For those who are interested in unusual choral music, beautifully sung and faithfully recorded on discs with quiet surfaces, these records are highly recommended.

Jesus shall reign ("Truro"). **Light's glittering morn** ("Easter Song"). **The Strife is o'er** ("Gelobt sei Gott"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 194). \$2.10.

Hail the day that sees Him rise ("Chislehurst"). **The Lamb's high banquet** ("Ad Coenam Agni"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 195). \$2.10.

Songs of Praise ("Northampton"). **Spirit of Mercy** ("Warrington"). **Holy, Holy, Holy** ("Nicaea"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 196). \$2.10.

Listed above are three more discs from the group known as The Royal School of Church Music Records. The interest that many of our readers evidenced in the ones that we listed previously prompted us to call attention to these. They are hymns beautifully sung by an excellent choir consisting of men and boys with fine organ accompaniments. They are, of course, in the tradition of the English Church, and were recorded in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, London.

We will be pleased to send to any of our readers who request it a complete list of these recordings. Just for a list, to the publishers of this bulletin asking Records.

Royal School of Church Music

VOCAL



Irra Petina Sings Songs of Tchaikovsky. (Sung in Russian). Irra Petina (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Walter Hendl. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-712. \$4.60.

Irra Petina's voice sounds very Russian, which is all to the good in this fine album of nine Tchaikovsky songs. Several of these are not in current catalogs, and they attest Tchaikovsky's ability as a song writer of peculiar distinction.

Though Columbia bills Miss Petina as a soprano, her's is in reality a mezzo-soprano of rather reedy, Slavic timbre. This artist has not the flaming temperament of a Nina Koshetz, but she nevertheless sings with an admirable vocal method.

Liza's aria from *Pique Dame* has not been done on records since Emmy Destinn's famous acoustical

version which was sung in German. This aria is Tchaikovsky not only at his most typical, but also at his best.

We can pass over *None But the Lonely Heart*, in which Miss Petina reveals nothing new, but such fine songs as *Don't Doubt Me, Dear* and *Green Grass* were well worth recording. The singer offers both these selections with fine-grained artistry.

Some of the songs are arranged by Hershey Kay, which one supposes means that the orchestration has been elaborated. Walter Hendl conducts what sounds like an orchestra of considerable size, and reproduction is both clear and honest in its dynamic values.

The selections are: *Liza's Aria* from *Pique Dame*, Op. 68; *It Was Early Spring*, Op. 38, No. 2; *Where Dancing Was Loudest*, Op. 38, No. 3; *Green Grass*, Op. 47, No. 7; *I Wish*, Op. 38, No. 4; *In This Moonlight Night*, Op. 73, No. 3; *Don't Doubt Me, Dear*; *None But the Lonely Heart*, Op. 6, No. 6; and *Whether by Day*, Op. 47, No. 6.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wolf: Nun wandre Maria. One side, and **Wolf: Herr, was trägt der Boden hier.** (Both from "Spanisches Liederbuch"). (Sung in German). Mark Raphael (baritone) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-12" disc (V-C-3591). \$2.

Mark Raphael has superbly caught the deeply religious sentiment of these Hugo Wolf songs, and gives performances that should more than please the discerning lover of *lieder*. His approach is intelligent, and his diction is near perfection. Gerald Moore, as usual, supplies accompaniments that give just the proper balance between the voice and the accompanying instrument, thus there is attained a beauty of performance that leaves the listener in ecstasy as each song is finished.

One does not have to be a student of German to appreciate these deeply moving selections. In *Nun wandre Maria* one cannot help feeling the heartfelt emotion in Joseph's breast as he encourages Mary, her time nearly come, and Bethlehem almost in sight. In *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier*, the scene between the crucified Christ and a sinner is so full of profound religious feeling, that one senses it regardless of the language in which it is sung.

We do not know when a record made such a deep impression on us as this one did. We immediately played it several times and we are looking forward to hearing it again and again.

R.

Songs of Many Lands. Josef Marais and Miranda, vocal duets with guitar accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set 605. \$3.94.

We predict that this fascinating little album will enjoy a wide popularity. Josef Marais, whose recordings for Decca of "Songs of the South African

Veld" have had a large and continued sale, is joined by Miranda, a lovely young Hollander with a delightful singing voice, in the presentation of these varied folk songs. These two singers make an ideal combination, and their "filigreed harmonies" and "rare artistry" make these simple ballads a delight to listen to. For this collection they have selected South African, French, Australian, Old English, American, Flemish and Dutch folk songs, most of which they sing in English to Mr. Marais's charming guitar accompaniments. Mr. Marais, a native of the Union of South Africa, has spent years in research and study of the folk songs of many countries as well as his native land and is presently considered an authority in this field of music. His meticulous care and the artistry of his arrangements is evidenced in these truly delightful recordings.

The songs in this album are: *Johnnie With the Bandy Legs*; *Ihashe* (Zulu Chant); *Waltzing Matilda*; *The Cherries*; *When a Little Farm We Keep*; *The Bouquet*; *Go Tell Aunt Rhody*; *The Sheep Are Coming Down the Road*; and *Beside the Windmill*. R.

The Minstrel Boy (arrangements by Normand Lockwood). Christopher Lynch (tenor) with John Wummer (flute), Leonard Rose (violinello) and Laura Newell (harp). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-722. \$4.75.

Christopher Lynch made a few records for Victor during the last year or so, and they met with only fair response from record buyers. Columbia recently signed this young artist and this month announces the album listed above. It is an unique item, and we predict that it will enjoy considerable popularity. Normand Lockwood has made arrangements of a number of Irish ballads, some of them sentimental and some humorous, with accompaniments by an instrumental trio (flute, violinello and harp), and they suit Mr. Lynch to a tee. He makes the most of the fine opportunity given him, and we are sure that he is going to make a lot of new friends among those persons who like real Irish ballads sung with just the proper tang of the Emerald Isle. All of the renditions are the essence of refinement, and always artistic and in the best of taste. The lovely accompaniments are absolutely fascinating.

The selections are: *The Minstrel Boy*; *The Young May Moon*; *You'd Better Ask Me*; *The Garden Where the Praties Grow*; *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*; *The Rose of Tralee*; *Ballynure Ballad*; *The Palatine's Daughter*; and *A Little Bit of Heaven*.

Edith Piaf Sings. (Sung in French). Edith Piaf (vocal) with orchestras conducted by Jacques Météhen and Guy Luypaerts. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set VSP-305. \$3.94.

Edith Piaf came to the attention of the American public through the French film *Etoile sans Lumière*

(Star Without Light), in which she was featured. Vox, on the strength of her popularity in the picture, sent to France for masters of some of the recordings she had made for French Polydor, and the present album is the result.

Miss Piaf is a prime favorite in the Parisian cabarets. In her vibrant, lusty delivery of character songs she evokes the excitement, the decadence, and the pathos of the Parisian demi-monde, and its vital artery—La Rue Pigalle—street of sins. Jean Cocteau, the famous French writer, is one of Miss Piaf's most ardent fans, and his praise of her gave her the start to the great popularity she has attained in Paris. A knowledge of French is helpful to a full appreciation of her songs, but the explanatory notes that accompany these discs make it possible for most anyone interested in ballads of this character to appreciate them.

Tosti: Parted. One side, and **Murray: I'll Walk Beside You.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1870). \$1.95.

These English selections by Beniamino Gigli were made during the great tenor's recent visit to Covent Garden. His voice sounds amazingly sweet and youthful, as these English songs bring out the gentler side of one of the loveliest voices the world has known.

There was a time when Tosti was the fashion. Edwardian drawing-rooms would have deemed it unthinkable not to have an album of Tosti songs on the piano. Great singers of the Victorian and Edwardian eras such as Patti, Melba, Eames and Ancona featured Tosti in their concert repertoires.

Parted, a typical Tosti song—and attractive too—is beautifully sung by Signor Gigli, as is its dulcet companion Murray's *I'll Walk Beside You*. The tenor's English has a rather attractive Italian tang, but each word issues forth clearly understandable.

A not important but beautifully sung little pair.
D.

Burl Ives Ballads and Folk Songs, Volume II. Burl Ives (tenor) with guitar accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set 431. \$4.20.

Decca has recently released the second volume of folk songs by Burl Ives, whom Carl Sandburg says, "... is the best ballad singer of them all." The present group is edited by Alan Lomax, who supplies the copious notes that will be found in the attractive booklet that accompanies this set of discs. Burl furnishes his own guitar accompaniments and presents these old-time selections in a way that is bound to please those who are interested in music of this character.

The ballads contained in this album are: *Turtle Dove*; *The Devil's Nine Questions*; *No Wood Fire*;

Ten Thousand Miles; *My Good Old Man*; *Po' Boy*; *I'm Sad and I'm Lonely*; *Down in the Valley*; and *Cowboy's Lament*.

Bach: St. Matthew Passion—Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen. (recit. and aria). (Sung in German). Aksel Schiotz (tenor), M. Steen Andreassen (oboe), with chorus and orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5267). \$2.63.

On this disc we have an outstanding Bach recording. Aksel Schiotz, who has gained wide popularity with record collectors in this country, gives a performance that calls for high praise, and he is ably supported by a fine orchestra and chorus.

The portion of the Passion recorded on this disc is section No. 26 containing the recitative *Behold how throbs* and the aria *I would beside my Lord be watching*. For those who relish music of this character, the present disc contains much to enjoy. The reproduction is excellent.

It's a Grand Night for Singing (from "State Fair"). One side, and **My Moonlight Madonna.** Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-10" disc (C-17510D). \$1.

When will Wagnerian sopranos learn that it requires an entirely different technique to sing such ditties as *It's a Grand Night for Singing* than it does to render the *Liebestod*? Dinah Shore wouldn't have the temerity to record the latter, but yet Miss Traubel seems to have no hesitancy in invading Miss Shore's field, and, as one might expect, with very sad results. If we were Miss Traubel, we would request Columbia to recall the present disc without delay. The *My Moonlight Madonna* side is not too bad, but *It's a Grand Night for Singing* is so terrible that it borders on the ludicrous.

Schubert: Ständchen (Serenade) (Schwanengesang No. 4). One side, and **Schubert: Liebesbotschaft** (Love's Message) (Schwanengesang No. 1). (Sung in German). Dorothy Maynor (soprano) with George Schick (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1372). 79¢.

Miss Maynor's many admirers will doubtless acclaim these lovely renditions. We have on this disc marvelous examples of effortless singing with a liquid quality that few singers could match. Mr. Schick supplies most artistic accompaniments. Reproduction excellent, and surfaces smooth as glass.

Danny Boy (arr. Weatherly). One side, and **Flow Gently, Sweet Afton.** Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Jacob Hannemann (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1312). 79¢.

Thomas L. Thomas is our favorite singer of such ballads as these and he doesn't disappoint us on the present disc. No fuss and feathers—just sympathetic

renditions in the best of taste. Splendidly recorded on noiseless surfaces.

Trenet-Lasry: Retour des Saisons. One side, and **Trenet-Lasry: Tombe du Ciel.** (Sung in French). Charles Trenet (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Albert Lasry. 1-10" disc (C-4502M). \$1.

Trenet sings in his inimitable style these intriguing songs. Even those who do not understand French seem to understand Trenet. Recording—excellent.

Youmans—arr. Gilbert: Through the Years. One side, and **Brahe—arr. Gilbert: Bless This House.** Rise Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Morris Stoloff. 1-10" disc (C-4501M). \$1.

There is a great demand for a recording by Miss Stevens of *Bless This House*, the song with which she closes her CBS Prudential Family Hour radio program each Sunday. She is making it available this month, and on the reverse side will be found the ever-popular *Through the Years* from "Smiling Through." We couldn't get very enthusiastic about either of these selections as rendered by Miss Stevens, but we guess that her listeners, who are numbered in the millions, will see to it that the sales of this disc are satisfactory.

Favorite Songs from Famous Musicals, Vol. II. Frances Greer and Jimmy Carroll with Dudley King and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-177. \$3.57.

Not particularly brilliant renditions of hits from musical plays of the last thirty years or so. If you are anxious for a recording of some selection, that perhaps brings back pleasant memories, then this album will have a real attraction, if not, don't get excited about it.

The selections are: *I'll Follow My Secret Heart* (Conversation Piece); *Zigeuner* (Bitter Sweet); *Make Believe* (Show Boat); *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Oh Kay); *I'm Falling in Love With Someone* (Naughty Marietta); *A Kiss in the Dark* (Orange Blossoms); *Yours Is My Heart Alone* (Land of Smiles); and *Love's Rondelay* (The Waltz Dream).

Hildegard Souvenir Album. Hildegard (vocal) with orchestra conducted by Hal Kanner. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A541. \$3.15.

The Hildegard cult seems to be steadily growing in number, thus this album has a rather large market awaiting it. The songs are attractive and easy to listen to, and it is very possible that this item will add quite a few new converts.

In a note appearing on the inside cover of this album, Hildegard states that the six songs in this group are ones that are most requested by her audiences. They are: *My Bel Ami*; *I Was Lucky*; *One Look at You*; *I'll Be Seeing You*; *Ask Your Heart*;

and *I'm Going to See You Today*.

PIANO



Schumann: Kreisleriana, Op. 16 (Eight Fantasies). Nine sides, and **Schumann: Arabesque in C Major, Op. 18.** Claudio Arrau (piano). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-716. \$7.10.

Kreisleriana consists of a number of charming little melodies, which, as Schumann himself tells us, stem from personal experiences of the composer. They date from Schumann's early period, when his courtship of Clara Wieck, being beset with so many trials and tribulations, caused him to be in a most melancholy mood a good part of the time.

From *Grove's* we learn that: "The 'Kreisleriana' have their origin in a fantastic story with the same title by E. T. A. Hoffmann, contained in his *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier* (Bamberg, 1814, p. 47). Hoffmann was a follower of Jean Paul, who indeed wrote a preface to *Fantasiestücke*. Half musician, half poet, Schumann must have looked on him as a kindred spirit; and in the figure of the wild and eccentric yet gifted 'Kapellmeister Kreisler,' drawn by Hoffmann from incidents in his own life, there were many traits in which Schumann might easily see a reflection of himself."

Cortot made a recording of this work for Victor but it has long since disappeared from the catalog, thus the present album is very welcome. Although not of prime importance, this whimsical music of Schumann's is fascinating in its way, and many music lovers will doubtless enjoy it very much. Arrau, in our opinion, gives a very satisfactory rendition—his approach is romantic enough to give it just the spirit that it needs. Columbia has captured the piano tones exceptionally well. R.

Chopin: Etudes, Op. 10 (Twelve Etudes). Seven sides, and **Chopin: Etudes, Op. 25** (Twelve Etudes). Eight sides, and **Chopin: Three Etudes** (for the method of Moscheles and Fétis). Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 8-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1171. \$9.45.

Brailowsky is probably the most distinguished interpreter of Chopin, having played in public that composer's complete piano works (169 pieces) in a cycle of six concerts no less than a dozen times—three times in the United States. It is therefore an event of prime importance when the twenty-four etudes making up *Opera 10* and *25* are made available in recorded form in one album. It would seem to us that that just about settles the matter, at least for sometime to come. Edward Kilenyi recorded these selections for Columbia in two albums (MM-368 and MM-473); the first album containing *Opus 10* in 1939 and the second containing *Opus 25* in 1941. They were quite well received and there may be

those who will still prefer these recordings to the present ones by Brailowsky, but we rather feel that they will be in the minority.

Victor has attempted to match Brailowsky superb playing with equally fine reproduction, and, in our opinion, has succeeded magnificently.

VIOLONCELLO



Schubert: Adagio in G minor—arr. Piatigorsky. One side, and **Schubert: Three Minuets**—arr. Piatigorsky. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) with Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72373D). \$1.25.

Piatigorsky has arranged these pleasing little Schubert melodies for solo violoncello and plays them most beautifully on this charming disc. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Handel—arr. Hubay: **Larghetto**. One side, and **Cassadó: Requiebros**. Edmund Kurtz (violoncello) with Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9953). \$1.05.

Two lovely pieces for solo 'cello brilliantly played with a wealth of feeling by the distinguished Edmund Kurtz. Reproduction—excellent.

CHILDREN



Carroll: Alice in Wonderland. Jane Powell (soprano), with supporting cast and orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-713. \$5.85.

Columbia presents a musical version of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, adapted and produced by Ralph Rose, with original music by Carmen Dragon. Jane Powell, through the courtesy of M-G-M, heads the cast of some eighteen players in this rather ambitious recorded production. It has been skillfully achieved in the Hollywood fashion, and while the more orthodox lovers of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece may be a bit hesitant to accept it, a lot of children of all ages from six to sixty are bound to feel that it is rare fun, and we believe that this unusual album will enjoy a wide popularity. Miss Powell handles the leading part of Alice very well indeed and her delightful singing is one of the important features. The cast on the whole is able, and the various familiar incidents of the text are brilliantly portrayed. The reproduction throughout is highly satisfactory.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Columbia Book of Musical Masterworks. Edited by Goddard Lieberson. Introduction by Edward Wallerstein. xiii+546 pp. Allen, Towne & Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, HW—Hargall, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tene Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

- - -

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL 15. NO. 12

FEBRUARY 1948

By mail to any address
50c. per year

WITH this issue, the fifteenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed, and according to Mr. Petrillo, it would seem that there will not be a need for many more volumes, because his musicians are *never* going to make any more recordings. Somehow, we cannot get very much excited about Mr. Petrillo's present ban. In 1942, he stopped his members from making recordings. The ban lasted over two years, and as we recall, it had little or no effect on the record industry as a whole. In the present instance the record manufacturers are well prepared, and the major companies have enough recordings on hand to make regular releases for at least two years. Shipments of records from abroad are continually becoming larger and more frequent. It would, therefore, seem to us that we will have plenty of new recordings to review for a long time to come, and there is no danger of our discontinuing THE NEW RECORDS within the foreseeable future.

We are indeed very glad, for it would be a great disappointment to us to abandon this publication when the interest in recordings is greater than it has ever been. We recall the comparatively small number of persons who were seriously building record libraries when the first issue of THE NEW RECORDS appeared in March 1933. Our subscribers were few in number in those days but they were zealous, and it was largely through their efforts that our circulation grew slowly but surely for the first few years. We are very proud of the fact that many of them are still numbered among our readers. It is not unusual to hear from subscribers who have carefully kept a complete file of all of the issues which they state they are continually referring to from time to time.

In recent years, the number of our sub-

scribers has doubled and tripled, which, we are sure, is a good guide for measuring the tremendous increase in the interest in recorded music that has taken place in a comparatively short time. Our readers are in no way limited to those persons who purchase records from us. As a matter of fact, we do not believe that twenty per cent of our subscribers are customers. Anyone is welcome to subscribe by simply sending in the small subscription fee (50 cents per year).

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. We only send renewal blanks with the February issue which is the last number of each volume.

* * *

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x + 318 + xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

Virgil Thomson came to New York in 1940 as music critic of the *Herald Tribune*, and with him came a new style of music critiques. He has been praised and he has been damned, but no one has accused him of not telling the truth—at least the truth as he sees it. Neither has anyone accused him of being dull—his critiques are always lively and interesting. At times they might be considered sensational—but they are never so just for the sake of gaining reader interest. Mr. Thomson is a too profound and sincere musician and writer to stoop to any such tricks of the trade as that.

In 1945, Mr. Thomson's *The Musical Scene* appeared and enjoyed an immense sale for a book of its kind. It contained a collection of

the best of his articles that appeared in the *Herald Tribune* during the first four years of his association with that newspaper. His new volume, *The Art of Judging Music* contains several score more of articles that have appeared since the publication of *The Musical Scene*. As a sort of introduction to his present book, Mr. Thomson has supplied a revised version of the speech he delivered in May 1947 before the Harvard Symposium on Music Criticism.

Mr. Thomson's second book covering the musical happenings in New York is certainly as interesting as his first. In fact, we found it even more so, for he has included numerous reviews of unique little concerts given in Times Hall and Town Hall, such concerts as are only given in New York, and thus are only known to us who live in the hinterlands by what we are able to read about them. It seems that he covers every concert that he possibly can and does not send a second-string writer to concerts of young and comparatively unknown artists if he can be present himself. He is always intensely interested in everything that is new in music, whether it be new compositions by established musicians, new composers whose works are reaching the public for the first time, or young artists giving their first recitals in the metropolis. Some of his most interesting articles concern concerts that the average big-time critic would assign to one of his assistants.

The Art of Judging Music is the sort of book that one may pick up in a spare moment and always find something that will be enjoyable and interesting. We found much that is worth re-reading. Those who are really interested in the music of our time will find this work of great value. It is a liberal education in what has been happening in the musical world, especially in New York, during the last several years, and in addition, those who are interested in truly brilliant and witty prose, will find much to admire. As Mr. Thomson has carefully indexed his present volume, it is very easy to find the article you may wish, to refresh your memory on some subject that you may at the time be interested in.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last fifteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet. Five sides, and **Kabalevsky: Colas Breugnon—Overture.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1178. \$4.20.

Tchaikovsky: Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1179. \$4.20.

Tchaikovsky is served with a number of new recordings by Victor this month, including the *Violin Concerto* as well as the two above. Koussevitzky's early Victor Set (DM-347) of the perennial *Romeo and Juliet* is superseded by a new one fashioned by Toscanini. But Koussevitzky was entrusted to remake *Francesca da Rimini*, formerly in the Victor catalog by Barbirolli (DM-598). Toscanini's task was more difficult than Koussevitzky, for the Boston maestro's *Romeo* was a splendid reading, while Barbirolli's *Francesca* was no criterion. Both men come through with highly rewarding performances, and Victor may be proud to place these new sets in its catalog.

It cannot be denied that there is competition awaiting any recordings of familiar Tchaikovsky works, for able hands have recorded Tchaikovsky since the advent of the phonograph. For those who like a more impassioned *Romeo and Juliet*, Rodzinski and the Clevelanders made one for them (Col. MM-478). Toscanini keeps the music under firm control, and presents it in an orderly manner, with dignified sentiment and colorful drama. It is an excellent performance that bears repeated hearings without cloying. The reproduction is first-rate.

Francesca da Rimini received an ideal performance by Beecham and the London Philharmonic (Col. MM-447) which won the plaudits of all the critics. It was considered superior to Barbirolli's set, although many persons liked his more conventional treatment. Koussevitzky's new set is a wonderful recording. The reproduction is clear and spacious. His reading is broad and dramatic and leaves the listener with a more lush and glowing impression than Beecham, whose drama is more finely and deeply etched. *Francesca* is a fine score that could bear more frequent concert performances. We highly recommend

both these new recordings as worthy additions to the high-fidelity catalog. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C. Eleven sides, and **Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Scherzo.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 6–12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1167. \$7.35.

The release of this set apparently seals the doom of the series of recordings which Toscanini made with the Philadelphia Orchestra. They will, presumably, never be released, for the Schubert *Ninth Symphony* was supposed to be one of the finest of the series. Various difficulties and caprices have prevented their release, as outlined in detail in Charles O'Connell's book "The Other Side of the Record." O'Connell claims, of the Toscanini-Philadelphia recording of this work, that "the nobility of the performance would make you feel like a better man; its poignant beauty would perhaps invite your tears." Well may that particular performance; but this one, made about a year ago with the NBC Orchestra does not stir us so deeply. The perfection of detail is certainly there, yet any nobility or beauty is generated by a seemingly fanatical desire to be perfect in every respect. The exquisite qualities of this magnificent Schubert score have absolutely eluded the conductor; affectionate warmth for its mysteries have not entered his soul. The playing is technically good, although many of the dynamic levels are distorted. Compare either of the Bruno Walter versions, the older Victor DM-602 with the London Symphony or the recent Columbia MM-679 with the New York Philharmonic, and notice the affection and heartfelt sympathy with which he unfolds this masterpiece. If you love the score and are moved by Walter's reading, you will not have noticed the technical details, which, by the way, are not bad at all.

For those who admire Toscanini's every effort, this set is their dish; for those who love the Schubert Symphony, Walter is their man. The reproduction of the present set has clarity and brilliance and not too much resonance—it is a bit on the hard side. The lovely *Scherzo* on the last side is played with dutiful daintiness. S.

Strauss-Dorati: Music for the Ballet "Graduation Ball." Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 4–12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1180. \$5.25.

This score has been constructed from the music of the "Waltz King." Most of the music is entirely unfamiliar, in fact all of it is except *Acceleration Waltz*, *Perpetuum Mobile*, and *Trisch-Trasch*. Dorati has been skillful in putting together a charming and frivolous affair which reminds us of *Gaieté Parisienne*. It is an unbroken chain of gay and sprightly tunes. Eight sides of this frou-frou is plenty for us; but the unique lilt of Johann Strauss is hard to resist.

The story of the ballet is as the name implies, graduation time at a fashionable girls' school in old Vienna. A ball is planned with the male guests being cadets of a neighborhood Military Academy. The story is obvious and commonplace, with an interesting sidelight being a flirtation between the General and the Head Mistress. All is gay, proceeds naturally, and ends simply and happily, with humorous touches thrown in.

Dorati being the daddy of the idea, plays the score with a knowing and loving touch. The Dallas Orchestra plays with abundant enthusiasm and lots of snap and sparkle. Here is a remarkably vital group which conveys unflagging enthusiasm. They are not quite as smooth as some other big league orchestras, but they are not coarse. Victor has great success in the Dallas hall, their recordings are always spacious and lifelike, and very clear. The Dallas series of recordings is turning out to be a worthy project. S.

Janacek: Sinfonietta. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 3–12" discs in album (V-C-7671 to V-C-7673; automatic sequence). \$5.99.

Leos Janáček (1854–1928) will probably be a new name to most of our readers despite the fact that he is considered the most important Czech composer after Dvorák and Smetana. Little of his music has been heard in America. We do remember that a performance of his most popular opera *Jenufa* was given in New York in about 1924. The present *Sinfonietta* dates from 1926 and is said to be a typical example of his style—a style that may sound strange and harsh to ears not accustomed to it. It is difficult to describe Janáček's music which is based on the rhythmic pattern of the speech of the Moravian peasants—it really must be heard, and this recording nicely gives us that opportunity. Unless you are a daring student of music in general, we strongly suggest that you listen to these records before you purchase them.

Gould: Interplay for Piano and Orchestra (American Concertette). Morton Gould (piano) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia. 2–12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-289. \$3.35.

This is truly a Morton Gould recording. Mr. Gould composed the music, plays the piano part, and directs the orchestra from his position at the keyboard. If you like this pair of discs, Mr. Gould is entitled to all of the credit, and if you don't, he can't very well duck the responsibility.

There is quite a story connected with this exciting music—you may not like it but it is exciting—no one could say that it is dull. Originally the work was written for Iturbi, who was to appear on a radio

program that Gould was conducting, and the composer called his four-movement composition for piano and orchestra *American Concertette*. It was a real success, and afterwards appeared on many concert programs. Presently, Jerome Robbins, adapted the music for a ballet which he named *Interplay*. The ballet appeared on Broadway in Billy Rose's "Concert Varieties," and later the Ballet Theatre added it to its repertoire and presented it first in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House and then on tour in both Europe and South America, as well as this country.

Interplay is in four sections: *Free Play*; *Horseplay*; *Byplay*; and *Team Play*. Mr. Gould describes them as follows:

"The first movement is described by the tempo mark *With Vigor and Drive*, and is very rhythmic and brash in the accepted classical form of two contrasting themes and a short development. The second movement is a *Gavotte*. It is a gay, short dance with a sly glance back to the classical mode. The third movement is a *Blues* and is what the title implies—a very simple and, in spots, 'dirty' type of slow, nostalgic mood. The fourth and last movement—*Very fast*—brings the work to a rousing and exciting close."

You will note that even its composer says that *Interplay* is exciting. We found it so, and for the type of music that it is we think that it is swell. Some folks say that Morton Gould reminds them of George Gershwin, but to us the only real similarity is that both young men wrote music that is as American as bubble gum. R.

Music of Cole Porter. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-721. \$4.60.

Cole Porter and Kostelanetz make a combination that is hard to beat. If you like Cole Porter's fascinating, and often witty, melodies, you are sure to like Kostelanetz's renditions of them, and by the same token, if you like Kostelanetz's style of playing, you are bound to be pleased with Cole Porter's music. Thus we have an album for the many fans of both of these clever artists.

The present selections are: *In the Still of the Night*; *All Through the Night*; *I Concentrate on You*; *I Love You*; *I've Got You Under My Skin*; and *Blow, Gabriel, Blow*.

Weinberger: Schwanda, the Bagpipe Player—Polka and Fugue. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (V-12-0019). \$1.05.

Many years ago the Minneapolis Symphony conducted by Ormandy made a recording of this music for Victor and it proved to be a big seller. Now that Ormandy has gone over to Columbia and Mitropoulos has switched to Victor, we presume that the earlier recording will be dropped from the catalog and the

present version substituted for it. The record buying public will certainly not complain, for on this new record we have a spirited performance of this lively music with the benefit of the best of modern reproduction.

Mourant: Swing Low, Sweet Clarinet. Reginald Kell (clarinet) with Ambrose and his Orchestra. One side, and **Mourant: Dance of the Potted Puppet.** Carl Barriteau (clarinet) with Ambrose and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (L-108). 79c.

This little disc was called to our attention a few days ago and we found it quite amusing and interesting. Reginald Kell, the distinguished English clarinetist, known to many collectors of chamber music for his fine recordings made with various chamber groups, tries his hand at swing in the "moanin' low" manner. We are not an authority, but it sounds pretty good to us, and we learn that genuine swing fans are going for this disc in a big way. Several shipments from England have been sold pronto.

Smetana: The Bartered Bride—Overture. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 1-12" disc (V-12-0018). \$1.05.

Numerous recordings of this popular overture have been made available but we doubt if any of them will match this fine spirited performance under the direction of Désiré Defauw. Such music is Defauw's meat and he makes the most of his opportunity with the fine Chicago Symphony. The reproduction is particularly brilliant.

Waldteufel: España—Waltz, Op. 236. One side, and **Piérné: Entrance of the Little Fauns.** Carnegie Pops Orchestra conducted by Walter Hendl. 1-12" disc (C-7591M). \$1.25.

The Boston "Pops" has recorded both of these selections, and if therefore you already have them in your collection, you will very likely not wish to duplicate. However, if you haven't, and wish to add a couple of sparkling, easy-to-listen-to selections, you have a choice of two first-rate "Pops" orchestras, both of which are splendidly recorded.

Filtz: Symphony in E flat. The Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc. (D-K-1680). \$2.10.

Anton Filtz (c.1730-1760) was one of the Mannheim Symphonists, the originators of the classic instrumental style. He was a prolific writer with numerous compositions to his credit during his short life. His works were very popular in England, as well as on the Continent, during the last half of the 18th century, but are practically unknown today. This disc is therefore of real importance to students of musical history. The present selection is pleasing to listen to in its quiet way, and the Boyd Neel

players present a performance that is highly satisfactory. English Decca *ffrr* recording.

Handel—trans. Stokowski: **Christmas Music** (from the "Messiah"). One side, and **Russian Christmas Music** (Traditional—trans. Stokowski). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9837). \$1.05.

Stokowski loves to transcribe such music for a modern symphony orchestra and he does it very well. Two charming examples of his work will be found on the present disc. Most anyone may enjoy music of this character and so this record should find favor with record buyers everywhere.

Schumann—arr. Herbeck: **Träumerei**. One side, and **Schumann**—arr. Jockisch: **Abendlied, Op. 85, No. 12**. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0017). \$1.05.

Two nice arrangements of lovely and well-beloved Schumann melodies superbly played by the Boston "Pops"—a disc that should find a welcome place in nearly any record library. Fine reproduction and quiet surfaces.

CONCERTO



Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Clifford Curzon (piano) with The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-47. \$13.65.

In February 1947, Columbia released a recording of the Brahms Concerto No. 1 by Serkin and the Pittsburgh Orchestra under Reiner. At that time we wrote that our enthusiasm for the First Concerto was cool, and we thought the work labored and pretentious. Having to hear it several more times, we either are getting used to it or we are beginning to like it. Anyhow, the new Decca set began to stir an interest. It must be admitted that Jorda gets on his seven league boots and wades into the score with a huge reading that is high, wide, and impressive. Decca's big resonant reproduction adds to the effect and Curzon is a formidable exponent of the piano part.

A couple of months ago Curzon gave a recital in Town Hall, New York City, and we happened to read Noel Straus' review in the *New York Times*. So impressed were we with his superlatives and untinted praise that we clipped the review. Never before have we seen such unqualified enthusiasm. Straus claimed Curzon an unexcelled technician and interpreter, and thought his recital one of the most satisfying of recent years (and there's plenty of piano recitals in New York). Every work on the program was given the very highest praise.

The present recording of the Brahms Concerto No. 1 should add much to Curzon's fame. It has

solid brilliance and a searching insight that is translated with an enormous technique. Very impressive indeed. And as the work is long, it is expensive indeed in this imported version. A choice of Serkin on Columbia at \$8.35 compared to Curzon on Decca at \$13.65 makes the choice a financial one. The Decca set is better mechanically and more imposing; Serkin and Reiner are good value, comparatively, on Columbia. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D, Op. 35. Erica Morini (violin) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Desire Defauw. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1168. \$5.25.

Surprisingly enough, this very popular violin concerto has not been recorded too often. Older versions by Elman and Hubermann having been cut-out, there remain only Heifetz (Vic. DM-356) and Milstein (Col. MM-413) in the domestic catalogs. Opinions are divided as to whether Heifetz or Milstein is superior. We rather preferred Milstein, although we have heard concert performances by Heifetz of this work that were the last word. Now Victor enters Morini, with a new version, to cleave many previous opinions. Morini turns in a performance notable for the poetic touch and the long driving impassioned phrases that soar high indeed. She often plays with complete abandon and seems to create an improvisational atmosphere—fresh and intense, yet free and abandoned. She is plainly carried away with the music from the very first violin entrance, and pours body and soul into a supercharged delivery of the first movement. This accounts for the tiny, nearly unnoticeable, imperfections in her technical performance. The second movement is played very well, and the finale is taken at quite a brisk tempo.

The reproduction favors the violin at the expense of the orchestra. The violin sounds fine, but, to our ears, the orchestra sounds too far away. Morini's individual reading made Defauw's job a bit difficult, however, he stayed pretty well with her. You will find this set interesting, but we suggest a comparison with the other two. While we enjoyed Morini a lot, and got some thrills from her performance, the Milstein album remains on the shelf in our collection. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Bach: Sonatas for Harpsichord and Violin. Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord) and Alexander Schneider (violin). 14-12" discs in two albums. Columbia Set MM-719. \$19.20.

This pair of albums makes an important addition to the repertory of recorded music. The six Bach sonatas for harpsichord and violin recorded by such able artists as Ralph Kirkpatrick and Alexander Schneider is an event that all music lovers will wel-

come with real enthusiasm. Years ago Gamut issued recordings of these lovely works by Alice Ehlers (harpsichord) and Boris Schwarz (violin) but we doubt if they are presently available. In March 1946 RCA Victor released a recording of one on them (Sonata No. 3 in E major) by Landowska and Menuhin. These are the only important recorded versions that were made available before the release of the present set.

Bach wrote these sonatas during the happy days at Cöthen, when he was kapellmeister of the orchestra at the court of Prince Leopold; a period that produced the Brandenburg Concertos and the Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues. Certainly a period that brought forth some of Bach's best-loved music. While these sonatas were not in any sense written in one mood, they were all written to be enjoyed. They contain several slow movements with a wealth of soulful melodies that cannot help touching the heart of any reasonably sensitive listener. The quick movements abound in gay dance tunes and indicate that the people of Bach's time enjoyed music with a bit of spirit and zip to it.

Columbia is to be congratulated for securing two such splendid artists for these recordings, both of whom have had long experience in chamber music. This is particularly important because these works are in no sense sonatas for violin with harpsichord accompaniment. Up until Bach's time, the harpsichord was considered an accompanying instrument in chamber music, and composers wrote for it merely a figured bass and the player supplied his own harmonies. In these sonatas Bach wrote out the harpsichord parts in full and made them equally as important as the violin scores. Thus we must have performers of equal ability, and ones who have been trained in ensemble playing, so that both parts blend nicely and a proper balance is held throughout. We are happy to say that Kirkpatrick and Schneider have accomplished this task in an excellent manner, and the recordings that they have made are ones in which they may take justifiable pride. The reproduction and record surfaces are highly satisfactory. R.

Hindemith: Sonata for Viola D'Amour and Piano, Op. 25, No. 2. Milton Thomas (viola d'amour) and Sara Compinsky (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Alco Set AC-204. \$4.83.

Hindemith's *Sonata for Viola D'Amour and Piano* is one of four sonatas that make up Opus 25. The others are for unaccompanied viola, unaccompanied violoncello, and viola and piano. Mr. Hindemith, himself, has recorded the one for solo viola, and Emanuel Feuermann the one for solo cello. Now the only work in this opus that has not been recorded is the viola and piano one.

The present work dates from 1929 and was written in that period when Hindemith was turning from his daring dissonances toward a more conservative

style, which marks his present maturity. There is still the rhythmic drive but there is evidence of a trend toward a more definite form in the classic manner. For those who are interested in the development of one of our most important living composers of chamber music, the present recording holds much of value.

In view of the fact that the viola d'amour is one of those instruments that has come down to us through the centuries and now only appears occasionally, the description of it given in Lawrence Morton's notes in this album may be of interest to our readers.

"The instrument has fourteen strings, arranged in two sets of seven each. The principal set is tuned to the chord of D-major, and its tonal range is just slightly greater than that of the ordinary viola. The second set gives the instrument its individual character. These strings are 'sympathetic'—that is, they are not touched by the player but, lying under the principal strings, close to the belly of the instrument, they vibrate 'in sympathy' with the vibrations set up by the principal strings. They are variously tuned, according to the desire of the performer, in order to achieve the greatest resonance."

Milton Thomas and Sara Compinsky are able artists who have specialized in the field of chamber music for some time and the performance that they give on these discs is a more than satisfactory one. The reproduction has been nicely accomplished and the discs are made of a very smooth nonbreakable material. R.

Suites by François Couperin and Marin Marais.

Alfred Zighera (viola da gamba) and Putnam Aldrich (harpsichord). 5-10" discs in album. Technichord Set T-9. \$6.15.

Releases by Technichord only come occasionally but when they do they are usually worth investigation. The present album is certainly worthy of the attention of all discerning music lovers. It contains two suites for viola da gamba and harpsichord, one by François Couperin (1663-1733) and one by Marin Marais (1656-1728). Each suite occupies five sides of this five-record set. Couperin is, of course, well-known to our readers, but perhaps a word or two about Marin Marais would be of value. He was born in Paris and was the greatest viola da gamba virtuoso of his time. He studied under Sainte-Colombe, and in 1685 became gamba soloist of the King's Chamber Music. He held this position until his retirement with pension in 1725. In addition to his skill as a player, he was noted for the music he composed for his instrument, which was published with his instructions how to best perform it.

Both of the suites in this album are lovely to listen to, and for those who are interested in late 17th and early 18th century French chamber music, we can think of nothing that has been issued recently

that will be more interesting or enjoyable. The artists are both masters in this field of music and the recording has been satisfactorily accomplished.

Alfred Zighera was born in Paris, and is presently a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston String Quartet. In 1935, with Putnam Aldrich, he founded the Society of Ancient Instruments, with whom he has appeared regularly since that date. Putnam Aldrich was born in South Swansea, Massachusetts. He received his B.A. from Yale, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard. He is a former piano student of Tobias Matthay, and studied harpsichord under Landowska. He has appeared as soloist on numerous occasions with the Boston Symphony and is presently Associate Professor of Music at Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

An especially fine twelve-page booklet accompanies these discs, which contains much information that will be of value to persons interested in music of this character. R.

Bloch: String Quartet No. 2. The Stuyvesant String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. International Set No. 301. \$4.99.

Bloch's second string quartet follows his first after an interval of nearly thirty years. His first dates from 1916 and his second work in this form was written at his present home in Oregon in 1945. It is interesting to note that the same artists who have just recorded his *Quartet No. 2* made the only available recording of his first for Columbia in 1940. It would seem that the Stuyvesant players are specialists in the music of Ernest Bloch. We recall that their earlier Columbia recording was well received by both the critics and the public, and we are very sure that the present performance will be considered highly satisfactory. They play with fine skill and a seemingly deep understanding of the music. This is very important, because Bloch has much to say, and a sympathetic comprehension is necessary in order to bring the composer's profound message to the listener in a way that will be meaningful.

The present work was first performed in London in the autumn of 1946, and the distinguished English critic, Ernest Newman, said on that occasion: "Ernest Bloch's new string quartet is, in my opinion, the finest work of our time in this genre, one that is worthy to stand beside the last quartets of Beethoven." Perhaps Mr. Newman's statement is a bit too strong, but surely this work should have the careful consideration of all discerning music lovers. This fine recording makes that easily possible. R.

Donizetti: String Quartet in D Major. Rome String Quartet. 2-12" discs (V-DB4649 and DB-4650). \$5.25.

Donizetti (1797-1848), although he composed over sixty operas, is only known in this country be-

cause of two of them, *Don Pasquale* and *The Daughter of the Regiment*. It will very likely be a surprise to many of our readers that he wrote no less than a dozen string quartets, one of which is listed above. This work was new to us, although it has been listed in the Italian HMV catalog for several years. It is pleasing tuneful music—such music as one may enjoy at the first hearing. It may not wear very well, but it was probably written with the enjoyment of the listener uppermost in the composer's mind, and if that were the case, Donizetti accomplished his aim very nicely. The Rome String Quartet give it a spirited rendition, and the reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Glinka: Trio Pathétique in D minor for Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano. P. Lefebvre (clarinet), F. Oubradous (bassoon), Noël-Gallon (piano). 2-12" discs. (OL34 and OL35). \$4.20. (Two-pocket album available with these records at 65¢ additional).

This pair of discs introduced us to the chamber music of the Russian composer Glinka (1803-1857). We found this little trio a charming little work in its quiet way and do not hesitate to recommend it to those who would like to relax with some pleasing melodies beautifully played. L'Oiseau-Lyre has selected top rank artists for this recording and has achieved most faithful reproduction. An unusual item for collectors of chamber music!

Dvořák: Notturmo for Strings, Op. 40. Busch Chamber Players conducted by Adolf Busch. 1-10" disc (C-17513D). \$1.

Not music of much importance but nicely played by the able Busch Chamber Players—perhaps if you are in the mood for music suggesting the calmness and beauty of a still night, the present disc will appeal to you. Reproduction—highly satisfactory.

OPERA

French Operatic Arias. (Sung in French). Maggie Teyte (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1169. \$3.42.

Here is a little album that will be a joy for lovers of 18th century music, as well as for those whose musical tastes are fastidious.

Maggie Teyte, still sounding like a young woman, offers French arias by Monsigny (1729-1817), Gretry (1741-1813) and Dourlen (1780-1864) and an Italian selection by Pergolesi (1710-1736). Some of these are sprightly and witty, while others provide the desired contrast with moods that are like a Mozart slow movement.

Miss Teyte is a past mistress at this sort of thing.



She has the style, the authority, the French diction, and above all, the knowledge of what she is doing.

Gretry's *Rose Cherie* is a lovely piece taken from the master's *Zemire et Azore*, a great success of its period. His arietta from *Le Tableau Vivant* is another excellent example from one of his great stage triumphs.

Monsigny is represented by the lightly tripping *La Sagesse et un Tresor* from *Rose et Colas* (1764) and by the caressing andante of *Adieu, chere Louise* from *Le Deserteur*. The latter is in reality an aria for baritone, but in defense of Miss Teyte, we can recall that Nellie Melba was frequently apt to program the tenor aria, *Aubade* from Lalo's *Le Roi d'Ys*, at her concerts. Miss Teyte sings the Gretry song most feelingly.

Victor Charles Dourlen, the composer of nine comic operas, is represented by the Rossinian arietta, *Je sais attacher des rubans* from *Les Oies de Frere Philippe*. This is a rarely sung piece.

The Pergolesi selection is Serpina's aria *A Serpina penserete* from his immortal *La Serva Padrona* (1754). Miss Teyte is fully alive to this charming melody and to the character of the acute young lady. Excellent accompaniment is provided by Jean Paul Morel and a small orchestra; the balance is all that it should be.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Otello—Canzone del salce (Mia madre aveva una povera ancella) (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Ave Maria (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9957). \$1.05.

Verdi: La Traviata—E tardi! Attendo, attendo (recit.) and Addio del passato (aria) (Act III). (Sung in Italian). One side, and Bizet: *Carmen*—Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante (Micaëla's aria) (Act III). (Sung in French). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann and Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (V-12-0014). \$1.05.

Berlioz: Damnation de Faust—D'Amour l'ardente flamme (Act IV). (Sung in French). Rose Bampton (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Wilfred Pelletier. 1-12" disc (V-12-0015). \$1.05.

Here are new records by two well known sopranos of the Metropolitan Opera Association! Not since the days when Claudia Muzio recorded for Columbia has an artist sung operatic music with such dramatic realism, as Licia Albanese.

Instances of this can be found in the *Otello* selections, as well as in the singer's *Addio del Passato* from *Traviata*. Sometimes, the gasps and writhings are excessive, particularly in the *Traviata*.

Mme. Albanese presents the *Salce, salce* and the

Ave Maria from Verdi's wonderful *Otello*. Here one finds a singular blend of good and bad singing. The soprano quite vividly suggests the plight, the gentle character of *Desdemona*, but her voice, which is properly plangent and attractive in some passages, is not under control in others, with resulting waverings in both tone and pitch. And why, why—Mme. Albanese—why ascend to the final high A flat on the word *Ave!* in full voice? Here a floating hushed pianissimo is required to the point of being an absolute necessity.

The *Traviata* selection is properly dramatic; as we have said, almost too much so. The letter from Germont is well read and the ensuing *E tardi!* has its desired effect. On the reverse side is Micaëla's *Air* from *Carmen* (taken from the *Carmen* high-lights album), which the soprano sings with much intensity and brilliance, but with not enough relaxed lyricism, given the naive and timid nature of the character.

Rose Bampton offers *D'Amour l'ardente Flamme* from Berlioz' *Damnation de Faust*, and a vote of thanks is due her for placing this beautiful and rare selection on wax and thus making it available to the record-buying public. More selections of this nature should be recorded and fewer *Vissi d'artes* and *Ritorna Vincitors*.

Mme. Bampton is in good voice and she sings *Marguerite's* haunting aria with unusual fervor and intelligence. The lovely accompaniment is exquisitely achieved under the direction of the singer's husband, Wilfred Pelletier. This is a record that is well worth investigating.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Tutto è deserto (recit.) and Il balen del suo sorriso (aria) (Act II). Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. One side, and **Verdi: Il Trovatore**—Qual suono! (recit.) and Per me ora fatale (aria) and Ah! se l'error t'ingombra (Nuns' Chorus) (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel and RCA Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (V-11-9956). \$1.05.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Cielo e mar (Act III). One side, and Meyerbeer: *L'Africana*—O Paradiso (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Richard Tucker (tenor) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 1-12" disc (C-72399D). \$1.25.

Before Petrillo's vexing ban, RCA Victor made vague promises of a complete *Trovatore*, promises that were apparently never realized. In fact, after all the ballyhoo of complete operas by this company, not one such recording has appeared within a year's time from the announcement.

The present *scena* from *Trovatore* by Leonard

Warren and chorus, is probably a sample of what might have been. Mr. Warren sings some recitative, the aria *Il balen*, and the famous passage *Per me ora fatale* with its ensuing chorus. *Il balen* is plagued by a bad echo, as though the singer's voice were rolling around in a huge vacuum. This is very disturbing to one's enjoyment. Mr. Warren is equipped with one of the largest baritone voices of the day. He sings with amplitude of tone and (in the aria) with much ease. Musical and textual accents that give such music as this variety and meaning, are apparently not his. The chorus under Robert Shaw performs its part of the scene crisply and with good tone.

The first operatic record by Richard Tucker, recorded (we are told) on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, is an auspicious one. Mr. Tucker offers *Cielo e mar* from *La Gioconda* (the opera of his Metropolitan debut on Jan. 25, 1945) and *O Paradiso* from *L'Africana*. Since his debut, Mr. Tucker has sung in *Traviata*, *Boris Godunov*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Boheme* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* with success. The new tenor sings *Enzo's* beautiful romance with round, vibrant tone and an impassioned style, which is good to hear. The recording of his voice by the Columbia engineers is excellent. This is a full, lyric tenor not capable of much nuance, but, nevertheless, warm and expressive.

We found the *Africana* excerpt less satisfactory than the *Gioconda*. Others have done it better. Emil Cooper and the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra offer a rich and well-considered background.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

VOCAL



Byzantine Singers. Byzantine Singers directed by Christos Vrioides. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 722. \$3.94.

This album is of particular interest because, as far as we know, it is the first and only album of Byzantine music. The selections are representative of a wide field. On this group of discs will be found: songs for Easter, liturgical music sung at the Greek Christmas, selections from the liturgy of St. John, folk songs and dances. Notes which accompany this album are very useful in introducing this strange music to the uninitiated.

The group of male singers who have made these recordings have been coached, and are directed by, Christos Vrioides. Mr. Vrioides was born in Crete and studied at the Odeon Conservatory in Athens. He came to the United States in 1923 and continued his studies at the Julliard School of Music in New York. His Byzantine Singers have toured extensively, and in addition to his work with them, Mr. Vrioides has conducted several symphony orchestras. At pres-

ent he is conductor of the Town of Babylon Symphony Orchestra, and lecturer on Byzantine music at Union Theological Seminary.

Judging from Mr. Vrioides's musical stature, we assume that these recordings are authoritative. The reproduction is satisfactory and the surfaces of the records are reasonably smooth.

Songs of the South African Veld. Josef Marais and his Bushveld Band. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set No. 113. \$3.15.

The fascinating little album listed above was issued by Decca a number of years ago and enjoyed quite a wide popularity for a novelty item. It was apparently dropped from the catalog, because copies have not been available for the last couple of years. Decca has now re-instated it and dealers have it in stock. Perhaps the great success of Mr. Marais's more recent album *Songs of Many Lands*, which was reviewed in this place last month, caused Decca to take the action it did.

Songs of the South African Veld is a collection of folk songs which Mr. Marais has found and learned during years of research in his native Union of South Africa. They will be entirely new to most American listeners. They are unique and will hold a rare fascination for those who are interested in music of this character. Mr. Marais has a pleasing voice and his fine diction makes the meanings of these songs easily understandable. He is joined in these recordings by a small group of male singers. Pleasing guitar accompaniments are supplied by Mr. Marais. The reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Beethoven: The Heavens Are Telling. (Creation's Hymn) One side, and Weyl—arr. Kremser: *Netherland Hymn* (Wir treten zum Beten). (Both sung in German). Richard Tauber (tenor) with Chorus and Organ. 1-10" disc (PA-PO-165). \$1.58.

The news of the death of the great Austrian tenor, Richard Tauber, and a shipment from abroad containing the present disc, arrived on the same day. Mr. Tauber's many admirers in this country will welcome, we are sure, the opportunity of securing the present disc. Both selections are beautifully sung and the soloist is nicely supported by an excellent chorus.

CHORAL



Bach: Magnificat in D Major. (Sung in Latin). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano), Susanne Freil (soprano), Paul Matthen (bass) and Ernice Lawrence (tenor) with the RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 5-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1182. \$4.99.

This month Robert Shaw and his excellent Victor

Chorale and Orchestra add to their fine account of Bach's wonderful *Mass in B Minor*, with an equally satisfying performance of the great Johann Sebastian's *Magnificat*.

The *Magnificat in D* is a forerunner of the *Mass*, and is said to have been composed for the Vesper Service on Christmas Day, 1723, a year which was of significance in the life of the composer, as it was then that he was installed as Cantor of the *Tomas-kirche* in Leipzig. The original key of the *Magnificat* was E-flat, but after a number of cuts and deletions, the definitive version found itself in the present key of D major.

The opening chorus is brilliant and carries the listener along on the sheer virility of the rhythm and the contrapuntal magnificence. The several arias, which follow, provide interludes for the massive choral sections. There are five of them in this work. Sturdy and dramatic is Bach's treatment of the chorus *Fecit Potentiam*, in which with a great climax he praises the glory of Almighty God. The final *Gloria* is also a matter of complex and ever increasing power and brilliance.

Mr. Shaw's qualities are again saliently present: his accuracy and neatness; his sense of transparency, no matter how complex the music; his feeling for the curving line and phrase.

The soloists are good. Blanche Thebom sings her aria, *Esurientes implevit* with style and excellent tone, while Paul Matthen, a reputable oratorio bass, does what he can with the ungrateful *Quia fecit mihi magna*. The soprano and tenor soloists—Susanne Freil and Ernice Lawrence—are obviously young singers. They are fully adequate and show a desirable knowledge of the style of Bach's music. Both have full-toned voices. Miss Thebom enjoys greater prominence in the lettering on the labels, undoubtedly due to her greater prominence as a singer.

There are various fine *obbligati*, William Vacchiano's first trumpet and Robert Bloom's *oboe d'amore* lending distinction to several passages, while Arthur Lora and Frederick Wilkins offer a two-flute *obbligato* to Miss Thebom's solo.

Recording of all these various elements is just as good as it was in Mr. Shaw's *B Minor Mass*—and that is saying a great deal.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

PIANO



Cage: *Three Dances for Two Pianos*. Maro Ajemian and William Masselos (two pianos). 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 877. \$5.62.

John Cage is the fellow who writes music for a piano that has been especially prepared to make it sound like a large group of tom-toms of various sizes. In this particular instance, he has written a work

for two of them. This brings us to the conundrum—what makes more queer noises than one Cage piano? The answer is, of course, . . .

Mr. Cage prepares his piano by placing a lot of bolts, nuts, coins, bits of paper, and what-have-you, so that they mute the strings, and then as the notes that accompany this album tell us, he proceeds to "devote himself to the problem of formal organization in a medium which has neither tonality in the old sense nor classic thematic mannerisms to support his progress."

When the distinguished critic, Virgil Thomson, heard the present selection at a concert at Town Hall on 15 February 1946, the following remarks appeared the next day in his review of the concert in the *Herald Tribune*: "John Cage's *Dance* for two prepared pianos is a rhythmic composition of tiny thudlike sounds that recalls Indonesian gamelan music. It is distinguished and beautiful and makes one feel good." This music may have made Mr. Thomson feel "good" but it certainly made us feel "terrible."

If you are a particularly venturesome soul and nothing upsets you, you might sample a side or two of this music, but if you are not, you had better give it a wide berth. R.

Piano Music of Chopin and Liszt. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1165. \$4.20.

Horowitz has chosen for this album several selections that show his virtuosity to perfection. We should think that he would be satisfied to have posterity judge him by these recordings. The first piece is the mighty Chopin *Ballade No. 1*, in G minor, Op. 23, which he plays magnificently with much power. For contrast he offers the melodic and soulful *Nocturne in F-sharp*, Op. 15, No. 2, by the same composer, and the rather impressionistic *Au bord d'une source* (No. 2 from *Années de Pèlerinage. First Year: Switzerland*) by Liszt. Just in passing we might remark, that those who think that Liszt wrote nothing but bombastic music for his instrument, might be surprised when they hear this little piece of his. It is not too much to say that they might very easily think of the great impressionist who followed him, Claude Debussy. The last selection, Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 6*, was the least interesting to us, but we suppose that one should leave an audience in a gay mood. Horowitz certainly achieves that result with his dynamic performance of this rousing work.

Chopin: *Nocturne in E flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2*. One side, and Chopin: *Fantaisie-Impromptu in C sharp Minor, Op. 66*. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0016). \$1.05.

For those who would like a single disc giving superb examples of Chopin played by one of the

greatest living interpreters of that composer, the present record is unreservedly recommended. Piano reproduction of the best is an added feature.

VIOLIN



Bruch: Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg, and Stanley Chaloupka (harp). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1183. \$4.20. Also available in vinylite, DV-11. \$7.35.

Here is something strictly off the beaten track. After the mass of single records of miscellaneous tid-bits played by Heifetz which have been recently released, this comes as a most pleasant surprise. It is a pity this work is so rarely performed, for it is appealing and tuneful. Possibly a violinist appearing as soloist with an orchestra does not care to play such a work as this as compared to one of the over-worked concerti, as it does not have the display possibilities. But that is where a phonograph comes in handy—when one wearies of the too familiar works, he can turn to the *Scottish Fantasy* and hear nice music beautifully performed.

The *Scottish Fantasy* uses some Scottish melodies as a basis for many of its episodes, melodies including *Auld Rob Morris*, *The Dusty Miller*, *I'm a Doun for Lack o' Johnnie*, and *Scots Wha Hae*. Bruch is very free in his treatment of these tunes, and applies elaborate ornamentation and developments. As a composer of many fine vocal and choral works, as well as violin concerti, his feeling for vocal line is rather apparent in many *cantilena* passages. Bruch, a distinguished musician, was a composer and a conductor, and his works show a highly finished technical skill. His harmonic system is conventional, and there is little to challenge the imagination in his music. Possibly this accounts for its lack of popularity. But when a real artist applies some enthusiasm to Bruch the result is most pleasant. We therefore highly recommend this lovely work, for the music itself, Heifetz' fine treatment of it, and the excellent recording it received. This is the first recording ever made of the *Scottish Fantasy*. S.

Kreisler: Viennese Rhapsodic Fantasietta. Fritz Kreisler (violin) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 1-12" disc (V-11-9952). \$1.05.

This original work for violin and orchestra is largely based on Viennese melodies for which Kreisler is famous. The great violinist seems to enjoy playing such music, and his many friends will delight in sharing that enjoyment when they listen to this disc. It is not profound, and is not intended to be. It is designed for pleasant listening, and the showy flourishes at the end are at best a bid for applause. Those who like this composer's *Caprice*

Viennois, Liebesfreud, Tambourin Chinois et al will think this selection is great stuff.

HARPSICHORD



A Treasury of Harpsichord Music. Wanda Landowska (Harpsichord). 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM1181. \$7.62.

There has not been an album released in recent years that will so enrich one's library of recorded music as will this one. Mme. Landowska has chosen some fourteen selections that are representative of the literature for the harpsichord and RCA Victor has recorded them with rare fidelity.

Among the composers represented are: Bach, Scarlatti, Rameau, Couperin, Purcell, Handel, Mozart, and Vivaldi. Mme. Landowska has prepared eight large pages of copious notes with beautiful and interesting illustrations. These notes are bound in the album. Each selection is carefully considered for its musical value and is set forth against the background of its origin. After one reads these notes, he has an urge to hear the music, and when he does, its fuller meaning, because of the information he has gained, is immediately evident. After one has perused these notes and listened to these recordings, he will begin to realize the important place the harpsichord holds in the development of music in general, and keyboard music in particular. The harpsichord dates from the 16th century and reached perfection during Bach's time (1685-1750). Toward the end of the 18th century it was supplanted by the pianoforte.

When one considers the cultural and educational value of such a set of discs as this, it is hard to believe that the great artists, such as Landowska, are never going to make any more recordings. R.

ORGAN



A Program of Organ Music. Mozart: *Fantasy in F minor, K. 608*. Dupré: *Prelude and Fugue in G minor, Op. 7, No. 3*. Mendelssohn: *Organ Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 65*. Bach: *Fugue a la Gigue*. Virgil Fox playing the organ in the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester, Mass. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1177. \$6.30.

Here is the nearest thing to an organ recital that has yet been released in one album. It is all original organ music, by some of the outstanding composers for that instrument. The album opens with the Mozart *Fantasy in F minor*, a monumental affair that is intensely interesting from the opening bar to the end. It is in three sections marked *Allegro*, *Andante*, *Allegro*, which are, respectively, an introduction and fugue, an andante in variation form, and a recapitula-

tion of the opening movement with a coda. Marvelous music, brilliantly performed by Fox, for which we are thankful it has been recorded.

Dupré, in addition to being one of the greatest contemporary organists, is also a master improviser and a composer of considerable skill. His music is seldom aimed to tickle the popular palate, but is rather the work of a virtuoso organist with a high artistic taste. The present work will require several hearings from the uninitiated, but anyone is at once aware of the fine craftsmanship, and in plain words, its fiendish difficulty.

Mendelssohn's *First Organ Sonata* will not make great demands on the listener, for it is a more obvious work though by no means trite. The lovely *Adagio* will linger long in the memory; the work as a whole is pleasing and well proportioned. Bach's *Gigue Fugue* is familiar fare that is always fresh and appealing.

If there is any organist who takes nearly anything and makes it sound interesting, it is Virgil Fox. His showmanship, love for the instrument, and prodigious technique, are matched by a fine interpretive sense and lively imagination. Never was an organ recital by this man "dry"—surely none that we have ever heard. He can bring a cheering audience to its feet as few other organists can. Given the fine material he uses in this set, we could have but one result—a masterful recital that is packed with human interest. It is all of that indeed, and it has been well recorded. If you like organ music, this album is sure fire for you.

MISCELLANEOUS



Khachaturian: Lezhinka (from Dance Suite No. 5). Bolshoi Theatre State Orchestra conducted by V. Nebolsin. One side, and **Artemovsky-Yorish: Zaporazhian from Beyond the Danube**—Oh, My Mother Told Me. (Sung in Russian). Litvinenko-Volgmut (soprano) with Orchestra of the Kiev State Theatre of Opera and Ballet. 1-12" disc (DI-4023). \$1.32.

If you are interested in knowing the type of recordings that are presently being released in Russia, this disc will give you some idea. On one side is a rhythmic dance of barbaric character by the popular modern composer Khachaturian; the other side contains a dramatic aria from an opera we have never heard of by a composer who is a stranger to us. The reproduction on both sides is very fair—much better than the average Russian recording we have heard.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Music of Schubert. Edited by Gerald Abraham. 342 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co. Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okel, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Parade o, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.